The Anatomy of a Successful Olympic Coach: Actor, Agent, and Author

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Little in-depth knowledge is known about the person behind successful coaching. Therefore, the current study was designed to comprehensively examine the personality of a successful Olympic coach. Using McAdams' whole-person framework, we sought to elicit a coherent description of this coach's personality by integrating data drawn from three layers of personality: (i) dispositional traits, (ii) personal strivings, and (iii) narrative identity. The findings suggest that, compared with the norm, the participant coach is emotionally stable, agreeable, conscientious, and open to new experiences. His achievement and power strivings shape his motivational agenda as a coach. His narrative identity identifies many redemptive sequences that speak of a coach who is seeking to redeem his failures as an athlete, to feel special, and who invests himself wholeheartedly into developing others to help fulfill their potential. Overall, the study, incorporating McAdams' personality framework, provided a deep understanding of the person as a coach. We were able to garner insights about how this individual typically behaves, what guides and structures his coaching priorities, and how he has made sense of his life experiences that are fundamental to his investment in coaching and winning. Tentative implications for coaches and coach developers are presented.

Keywords: high performance coaching, personality psychology traits, strivings, life narrative

Of interest to many scholars and practitioners is a deeper understanding of the winning high-performance coach including; what drives them to be successful, and a stronger sense of who they are (identity). Coaches are performers in the coach-athlete-performance relationship (Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, & Chung, 2002; Kristiansen & Roberts, 2010) and, as performers, they are typically judged by what they do and the performance outcomes of their athletes (e.g., Mallett & Côté, 2006). Whilst coaches' behavioural traits are visibly on display, less is known about (a) why coaches want what they want; and (b) the personal narratives that underpin their traits and motives that give us deeper insight into who the coach is. Coaches, as leaders, are not only characterized by traits but also by the goals they seek, their beliefs and values, as well as the identities they bring. People, athletes in particular, buy into whom a coach is (their self and story), not just how they behave, which is often missed in research trying to capture a coach's

personality (e.g., Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2015). In other words, to understand how coaches influence athletes is to appreciate not only their traits but also why they coach, and how they tell their story within the context of their sport. Hence, the key aim of this paper is to know a successful coach across the spectrum of their personality.

Coaches are central to the coach-athlete-performance relationship, especially in high-performance sport (Cushion, 2010; Gould et al., 2002; Kristiansen & Roberts, 2010; Mallett, 2005). In this relationship, coaches, who are performers in their own right, are responsible for leading and managing the coaching process under much pressure to produce successful athlete performers (e.g., Kristiansen & Roberts, 2010; Mallett, 2010). Nevertheless, what drives their behavior and how they coach? Why are some coaches more successful than others? Specifically, what do we really know about a coach as a performer and why he/she behaves the way he/she does in attempts to get the best from others?

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Person-Based Psychology

In thinking about the coach as a performer, it is potentially useful to consider what we know about the person, and specifically, a comprehensive examination of that person. Employing a *person-based psychology* of a coach (or any individual) can be traced to the very founding of personality psychology—for example, the works and views of Allport (1937), Murray (1938), and Rogers (1951). Allport, in particular, championed what can be thought of as the "middle way" in personality psychology (Singer, 2005). In an era of experimental and behaviorist domination, and a positivist emphasis for studying human beings, Allport recognized the value of also understanding people in their own context and the subjective meanings they construct of their life experiences. From his work, Allport developed his now famous idiographic and nomothetic distinction in studying the person. This distinction emphasized the importance of not losing sight of the integrity of the individual's unique phenomenological experience in favor of understanding them in mere relation to normative means for particular constructs. Embracing both general principles of psychology and an idiographic pursuit of the unique individual became one of his hallmarks, which set the basis for synthesizing concern for the whole person by integrating humanistic and nonreductive perspectives with advances in experimental and differential psychology (Nicholson, 2003).

In the history of personality psychology, a person-based psychology, advocating the study of the whole person, has not always been the favorable norm (McAdams, 1997). For example, whilst setting the standard between the 1930s and 1950s, this holistic approach was marginalized by the dominant reductionism of behaviorism and psychoanalysis on the one hand, and by the antiexperimental perspective of humanistic psychology on the other (Singer, 2005). Equally, by the 1970s, the field of personality psychology, let alone person-based psychology, was 'backgrounded' following damming verdicts by social psychologists questioning any involvement of the person in predicting behavior (cf., Mischel, 1968). However, fast-forward three-quarters of a century from Allport's original work and personality psychologists' have returned to concerns about articulating what matters most in understanding individuals: the person as a whole, including contextual, genetic, and experiential factors. In this regard, integrative models and systems for understanding holistic perspectives of personality have emerged (e.g., Mayer, 2005; McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 1996; Mischel & Shoda, 2008), marking parallels with 'grand theories' originally promoted by the field's ancestors.

McAdams and Pals (2006) defined personality as "an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and integrative life stories complexly and differentially situated in culture" (p. 212). This integrative perspective concerns a commitment to the combined positivist and interpretive methods for capturing the complexity and dynamics of human beings; it also emphasizes various categories of psychological constructs relative to human variation, and how biological and social forces might determine and shape these constructs. Research on coaches rarely considers these *people* from this integrative and holistic perspective. Typically, empirical accounts of coaches' personalities focus on traits or broad constructs (e.g., Becker, 2009; Lee, Kim, & Kang, 2013; Nash & Sproule, 2009; Norman & French, 2013; Olusoga, Maynard, Hays, & Butt, 2012) that, from a whole person perspective, provide an incomplete psychological picture of these individuals.

To advance what we know about the successful coach, we consider it worthwhile to explore a more comprehensive understanding of this individual. This understanding could embrace experimental and idiosyncratic approaches, and the integration of these approaches, for determining how and why a coach functions as he or she does. A person-based psychology framework for understanding a given coach allows researchers to go beyond traits and to consider an interdependency between the person and environment that merges biological factors, motives, biographical accounts, and sociocultural influences to produce a coherent and complex personality system (McAdams, 1995). A shift toward an integrated understanding of a person may offer a more nuanced view of coach personality that could be generative for future research in this area, including coach recruitment and development. Embracing an integrative perspective of coaches also helps align this topic of sport leadership with modern perspectives in personality psychology, in addition to calls in sport and exercise psychology promoting this exploration (cf. Coulter, Mallett, Singer, & Gucciardi, 2016).

McAdams' Integrated Framework of Personality

According to McAdams (2013), the psychological self can be understood in terms of three broad metaphors: The self as *social actor*, *motivated agent*, and *autobiographical author*. These layers of the person consider three interrelated and increasingly complex perspectives that, when considered together, enable a comprehensive understanding of why we do what we do (McAdams & Cox, 2010).

As *social actors* people are necessarily performative in many daily life activities (McAdams, 2013). Building on a genetically influenced foundation, from birth, humans are social actors whose behavior is constantly evaluated by self and others (e.g., in terms of abilities to self-regulate and adapt to group norms). As people develop, they begin to form a progressively consistent silhouette of *dispositional traits* (McAdams & Olson, 2010). These broad (and partly inherited) traits represent peoples' typical behavioural signatures (McAdams, 2013) that eventually come to reflect their social reputations in particular roles: "I am a tough coach"; "He is a caring coach". Overall, traits give a broad and decontex-

tualized outline of peoples' personalities; nevertheless, to understand people more fully, there remains much more to know (McAdams, 2013).

From as young as seven to nine years, children begin to add another layer to their personality, that of a *motivated agent* (Bandura, 1989; Erikson, 1963; Harter, 2006; McAdams, 2013; Piaget, 1970; Sameroff & Haith, 1996). Unlike the social actor's traits, this aspect of personality is more fluid and dynamic and is voiced in terms of personal ends, ideologies, and cognitive style (McAdams, 2013; Singer, 2005). Capturing what people want and value in their lives, in time, role, and context, is a basic feature of this personality layer (also referred to as characteristic adaptations; McAdams, 1995). Thus, beyond understanding people as social actors, McAdams recognizes that people are *also* motivated agents who choose where and how to invest their time and effort.

The third layer of personality in McAdams's (1995) integrated framework considers the self in terms of how one makes sense of their past life experiences in creating a cohesive, purposeful life narrative and identity (McAdams, 2013). This layer of personality, which begins to develop in early adulthood, builds upon the other personality layers (social actor and motivated agent), enabling one to also become an *autobiographical author* (McAdams & Olson, 2010). Being an autobiographical author refers to the capacity to reflexively consider one's past, present and imagined future to create a coherent story. As a storyteller, people are afforded the opportunity to consider and articulate "why the actor does what it does, why the agent wants what it wants, and who the self was, is, and will be as a developing person in time" (McAdams, 2013, p. 273). This layer of personality is strongly shaped by social and cultural forces in creating an evolving and unique life narrative. This third layer of personality is about defining who a person is in time and understanding what gives one's life a sense of meaning and purpose (McAdams & Pals, 2006).

The primary aim of this study was to reveal a deeper understanding of a successful international coach using McAdams' integrated personality framework. Specifically, we sought to explore the personality of this individual from a whole person perspective using profiling tools that reflect each of McAdams' three personality layers. Understanding coaches as social actors, motivated agents, and autobiographical authors is a unique way of exploring coaches' personalities. In time, we envisage McAdams' scheme to be a useful structure to help us learn more about how coaches typically behave, why they behave in the ways that they do, and how they make sense of their life experiences that informs their unique identities. For now, however, the focus was to emphasize the potential utility of McAdams' framework for studying the personality of a highly successful coach, which represents initial steps toward this broader goal and the use of case study methods to promote the development of new scientific insights in coach personality research.

Method

Methodology

Kantian notions of understanding a person as unique foster the use of idiographic research methods, such as case studies, as one way of advancing individual difference research in coaching. A case study approach was considered both generative and important because this methodology arguably provides a more intricate, realistic, and humanistic picture of a world-class coach. A case study lends itself to the multilayered, person-based approach of the current study. Appropriate to case studies is the collection of multiple data sets (e.g., Yin, 2014) (e.g., at each of the three layers) to enhance understanding of a highly successful coach (intrinsic) and to also facilitate understanding of people who are consistently successful in the international arena (instrumental) (Stake, 1994). Several research paradigms and methodologies framed this study; that is, the use of surveys, strivings, and life story necessitated an eclectic mix of positivist, critical realist, and phenomenological paradigms reflective of conceptually distinctive layers of personality (McAdams & Pals, 2006) that *together* help to provide increasingly more complex understandings of the participant coach. Research that examines a deeper understanding of coaches can meaningfully contribute to coach development; specifically, in the identification of personal values, philosophies, and goals as well development of inter- and intrapersonal skills (e.g., Carless & Douglas, 2011; Chan & Mallett, 2011; Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Gilbert & Côté, 2013).

Participant

The participant coach, who coaches male and female elite athletes (including youth) and was a former international athlete in the same sport, voluntarily agreed to participate in this study and gave explicit consent to be the focal subject of this paper. He was purposively selected (Patton, 2002) because he fulfilled the criteria of a successful Olympic coach, whose athletes have won multiple Olympic and World Championships medals. He is a married, middle-aged Caucasian, with children, who has coached an individual sport for more than 30 years. The coach has completed the highest coaching award (accreditation) in his country for that sport and completed the first two years of a university degree in a related field before commencing coaching but never completed the award. We provide limited demographic details of the participant coach to promote anonymity and use the pseudonym Tom.

Procedure

This exploratory study formed part of a larger project, which was granted prior institutional ethics approval. The participant completed both measures and was interviewed for 115 minutes. Data were transcribed verbatim producing 39 pages of single-spaced text.

Measures

NEO-FFI-3.   The NEO Five-Factor inventories (self- and observer reports) are widely established within contemporary psychology research (e.g., Allen, Greenlees, & Jones, 2011, 2013; Hughes, Case, Stuempfle, & Evans, 2003). The NEO-FFI-3 is a self-report measure that collects data specific to the first layer of McAdams integrated framework of personality—self as social actor (dispositions). The NEO-FFI-3 (Costa & McCrae, 2010) is a 60-item self-report measure assessing the five-factor model of personality—openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992). For each item, respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree that the description is true of them (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The NEO-FFI-3 has high internal consistency (α = .78–.86), sound factor structure, and convergent validity with the longer 240-item NEO-Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-3; McCrae & Costa, 2010). Earlier versions of the NEO-FFI have been well validated including convergence with other measures of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The NEO-FFI-3 has been successfully used in correlational studies in sport contexts (e.g., Allen et al., 2011; Hughes et al., 2003), lending credibility to its use in the current study.

Personal Strivings.   This strivings measure (Emmons, 1989) captures information related to the second layer of McAdams' (2008) integrated framework of personality—characteristic adaptations (i.e., motivated agent). Respondents are asked to consider what they typically are trying to do in everyday behavior. They respond to the stem: *On a daily basis I typically try to. . . .* ; for example, "appear physically strong", "avoid appearing incompetent or weak". These strivings represent an underlying organization of how individuals think about their goals. To create a *striving assessment* matrix, respondents are then asked to consider each striving and rate them along a continuum from 1 (not very) to 5 (very) on the following: How committed are you to this striving?; How important is this striving to you?; How likely is it that you will be successful in doing it?; How challenging is this striving for you?; How much satisfaction does it bring to you when you achieve it? This matrix allows the coding of striving content and the abstraction of motivational themes.

Life Story and Defining Moments.   This semistructured interview method seeks to identify critical incidents that have shaped a person's life and how he has made sense of those experiences using McAdams' (2008) life story and defining moments interview schedule. This interview seeks to reveal a person's life narrative (e.g., Zehntner & McMahon, 2015), and represents the third layer of the integrated framework of personality (self as autobiographical author). The aim of the interview is to understand the different ways in which a coach has experienced his life in and out of sport and how this might contribute to who they are, how and why they coach, and the meaning and purpose of coaching in their lives (e.g., Carless & Douglas, 2011; Zehntner & McMahon, 2015). The semistructured interview is divided into several sections including: Life chapters; Key scenes in the life story (e.g., high and low points); Future script (e.g., dreams, plans); Challenges (e.g., health, loss); Personal ideology (e.g., social values); Life themes; and Reflection (e.g., central theme in the life story). For specific interview questions see McAdams (2008).

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a three-phase sequence that reflected what McAdams referred to as the "logic of person perception" (McAdams & Manczak, 2011, p. 41). This logic suggests that traits lie on the surface of peoples' personalities and are the *initial inferences* made when describing them. However, the better people are known, the more the perceiver has access to *deeper* aspects of personality—the goals and motives that energize and direct behavior, and deeper still, the intimate narratives that give a life its meaning and purpose. The data analysis phase thus proceeded in a way that crossed different 'levels' of understanding the participant—from macro (broad and decontextualized traits) to micro (personalized and existential life story). Scores for personality traits were interpreted for each trait domain and personality style graphs were plotted following scoring procedures offered by Costa and McCrae (2010). Coach strivings were coded for prominent motivational themes (e.g., avoidance/achievement goals, self-presentation, personal growth) and guided by Emmons' (1989) structure. The two authors, who were familiar with this procedure, coded the data, abstracting motivational themes. The two coders separately identified codes and themes until they reached at least 85% consensus (cf. Smith, 2000), after which any remaining differences were discussed and resolved. The coach's life story interview was transcribed and analysed following procedures by Sparkes and Smith (2014). This involved an initial thematic narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008) to identify key patterns based on the story's content (i.e., *what* was said) and how the coach had made sense of some critical and self-defining moments in his life. This was followed by a structural analysis of narrative form, which concerns *how* stories are told and provide a sense of the overall plot of this coach's life narrative. Through a process of triangulation and comparative discussions between both authors, the key themes, patterns, and narrative types were formed (Tracy, 2010).

To assist the analysis and data integration phase, clinical guidelines developed by Levak, Hogan, Beutler, and Song (2013) were followed to integrate different data sets to generate a more complete understanding of the participant coach (Tom). Levak et al. suggest several practical steps for managing and integrating multiple data sets that were relevant to this study, including: (i) generation and refinement of anchor hypotheses; (ii) expanding and refining anchor hypotheses by incorpo-

rating supplementary data; (iii) blending of potentially conflicting data; (iv) integration of life history data; (v) providing feedback about preliminary analyses; and (vi) the collaborative process between Tom and the research team in compiling what was deemed to be a fair and respectful report. Consistent with the guidelines from Levak et al. the authors challenged each other about what each layer and corresponding dataset added to and omitted in creating a holistic profile of Tom's personality at each phase of data integration. We acknowledge the potential subjectivities that we brought to the study and therefore to foster reflexivity and sincerity (Tracy, 2010), we reflected on the specific relationship each author had with Tom (e.g., from personal to detached) and the potential influence on our data interpretation. Thus Tom was given time to reflect and elaborate on the initial findings before ratifying the final report (Tracy, 2010). Overall, the data integration phase repeatedly engaged Tom and both authors and the Tom in reflecting, discussing, and reviewing the data sets in this iterative and integrative process.

Results

Personality Traits

The Big Five traits are a comprehensive way of articulating Tom as a *social actor*, and they are useful because they provide an insight into the kind of person he typically is, such as how he controls his emotions to the way in which he organizes his day-to-day life. The following five individual trait dimensions are presented in descending order of strength on the basis of a normative evaluation of the scores (see Table 1; Costa & McRae, 2010). The most distinctive feature of Tom's trait personality was his score for *Neuroticism* (N). People who score in the very low band for N are typically emotionally stable, resilient, and rarely experience strong negative emotions. Under high stress, this coach is likely to remain calm, relaxed, and hardy. Compared with the average person, he is less likely to become frustrated and angry. Overall, this coach's N score reflects an easy-going individual who rarely experiences feelings of guilt, sadness, and hopelessness.

Agreeableness (A) items measure interpersonal tendencies to get along with others and to show sympathy and altruism. Tom scored high in Agreeableness and therefore is likely to trust and want to please others, and

have a preference to avoid conflict. Typically, these people favor cooperation to competition. Moreover, they are generally willing to help others. Colleagues and friends might characterize them as likeable, good-natured, flexible, and sympathetic.

Tom also scored high for *Conscientiousness* (C). People who score in this range tend to lead highly structured lives, striving to meet their goals in a planned and deliberate manner. In comparison with the average person, they have a high need for achievement. They are typically orderly, punctual, organized, and self-disciplined. In addition, they are committed to completing tasks. They typically put work before pleasure and are earnest in their moral, personal, and public responsibilities. Such people are described as careful, reliable, hardworking, and persevering.

Tom described himself as high in *Openness* (O). High scorers on this trait dimension typically enjoy novelty and variety in experiences. They are sensitive to their own feelings and have an above average ability to recognize the emotions of others. They tend to have a high appreciation of aesthetics (e.g., art, nature). They are likely to demonstrate a willingness to consider new ideas and values that may make them highly tolerant of others, and may lead them to adopt somewhat unconventional attitudes. These people are described as original and curious.

Finally, Tom scored in the average range in *Extraversion* (E). People who score in this range are described as moderately sociable, and experience positive emotions (e.g., joy), similar to most other individuals. They are neither overly dominant nor assertive, nor do they sit back and let others do the talking. They form close friendships and relationships similar to most well-adjusted people.

A feature of the NEO profile is the ability to combine pairs of factor scores to gain a better understanding of personality from a trait perspective. Costa and McRae (2010) advertise 10 'personality styles' that reflect the various paired combinations of Big Five traits (e.g., a person's style of defense, character, and well-being). From Tom's trait profile, five notable styles worthy of discussion include his styles of defence, impulse control, anger control, learning, and character. His profile (low N, high O) suggests that he is adaptive and responsive in conflict situations (Defence). He is directed in that he has a clear sense of his goals and how to achieve them despite facing challenges (low N, high C; Impulse control). The combination of low N and high A suggests that he is typically slow to express any anger and can move-on and find the middle ground in disputes (anger control). The trait combination of high O, high C describes his style of learning as a 'good student', and thus a key feature of his personality (as a social actor) is that he combines a desire for learning with the diligence and organization to excel. It also suggests that he is likely to go as far has his potential will allow. His style of character (high A, high C) is described as an 'effective altruist'; in other words, he is someone who works diligently for the benefit of the group and channels his efforts into the service of others.

Table 1   Coach's Trait Profile (NEO-FFI-3)

Scale	T Score	Range
(N) Neuroticism	34	Very Low
(A) Agreeableness	59	High
(C) Conscientiousness	58	High
(O) Openness	57	High
(E) Extraversion	55	Average

The strength of traits for understanding personality is that they are comparative and decontextualized (McAdams, 1995). From this perspective, Tom's trait profile provides an understanding of how he presents himself as an actor on the social stage. However, while this profile might be *necessary* for understanding him, it is *insufficient* to explain the course of his life or the drivers underneath his behavior. In particular, to know the personality of this successful coach, we need to know much more about his motives and how he has formed a deep sense of meaning from his life experiences—especially those related to coaching. For example, his traits provide an outline of his personality that tells us he is typically agreeable, conscientious, and emotionally stable. But how do these qualities manifest themselves in his role as a coach? What drives his motivation to be this way? What is he trying to accomplish and why by doing so? To answer these questions, and to enhance our understanding of this coach, we must shift the epistemological lens and examine other important layers of his personality.

Personal Strivings

In assessing personal strivings, the focus is on understanding Tom as a *motivated agent*; that is, we are interested in capturing *what he wants* in his life that underpin his goals as a coach, rather than how he typically engages with the outside world as a social actor. Tom identified six personal strivings, which are presented in Table 2. These strivings give an insight into the motivational agenda that guide and structure his behavior and coaching priorities.

Tom's strivings reflect two main motivational themes: (a) Achievement (e.g., "to be successful at work"); and (b) Power (e.g., "to be a leader and influence others"). He strongly seeks to create an achievement-based environment. Moreover, the use of language to "challenge*"* and "improve*"* athletes implies an achievement goal focused on improvement. It is noted that these achievement strivings correspond with his high trait scores for Conscientiousness (a high need for achievement). Tom also wants to influence others, especially in terms of their development. Two strivings ("inspire my athletes*"* and "educate my athletes*"*) support his desire to influence those under his guidance, consistent with his

personality style ('effective altruist') as a social actor. He describes his mentees as "my athletes" in four of his six strivings, reinforcing the prominence of power (to inspire, challenge, educate, and improve) as a central motivational theme in his personality. From the motivational matrix, while perceived as highly challenging, Tom appears very optimistic in his ability to achieve his strivings. He is also highly committed to developing others, with an emphasis on attainment ("create winning environment"). His strivings all provide him with extreme satisfaction when achieved. This is a clear indication of his fulfillment in seeing others develop under his guidance, and in establishing a learning environment that emphasizes success. Interestingly, he also expressed concern to "let no one get to me", which reflects an *Avoidance* motivational theme. With limited information, it is unclear what this particular striving is relating to.

We now know that Tom is highly motivated for his athletes to be successful and, by association, he will consider himself successful. Furthermore, we know that Tom is approach-oriented and wants to influence his athletes in positive ways; however, much about the coach remains unknown: Why is he driven by investment in others? Why is it important for him to be successful? Why does he derive such satisfaction from inspiring, educating, challenging his athletes to be winners? What does it mean for him to be a coach within the context of his own life? How does he make sense of his lived experiences and the person he seeks to become; in other words, what is his narrative identity?

Narrative Identity

The narrative identity of Tom refers to how he tells his story about *who he is*, and what he perceives has shaped him to be that way. It relates to the third stage of McAdams' multilayered personality theory—the self as *autobiographical author*. It involves a recanting of his key life experiences, and how they have connected to from his past, his present, and his future the way he sees it. To unearth Tom's narrative identity, a life-story interview was conducted. The main focus of the life-story interview was to reveal what experiences made Tom the way he is, and how they relate to the coach (and person) he perceives he has become.

Table 2   Coach's Personal Strivings Matrix

Typical Coach Behaviours	How committed are you to this behaviour?	How important is this striving to you?	How challenging will this striving be for you?	How likely is it that you will be successful in doing it?	How much satisfaction does it bring to you when you achieve it?
Let no one "get to" me	4	4	4	4	4
Inspire my athletes	4	5	5	4	5
Challenge my athletes	5	5	5	4	5
Educate my athletes	4	4	4	4	5
Create winning environment	5	5	5	5	5
Improve my athletes	4	5	5	4	5

Life Chapters

Family.   Tom comes from a 'mixed' European family and described a strong positive relationship with both close and extended family for as long as he can remember. This stable and positive relationship with family helps provide a partial explanation to the trait finding that Tom is emotionally stable and low in neuroticism (McAdams, 2015). Tom, the only son in his family, described himself as very family-oriented, and sees his mother two to three times per week, demonstrating an investment to family time despite a busy schedule. Perhaps Tom's family-oriented nature, particularly to extended family, can help explain why he invests so much in his athletes. He spends a large amount of time with his athletes and perhaps sees them as an extended family, and because of his positive experiences with family investment, he translates that into his relationship with his athletes.

Entry Into Sport.   Tom started his sport at the age of six, but of particular interest is the reason why. He had a medical condition that led to the subsequent conclusion by his doctor (who is also his uncle) and parents that [sport] was the only sport he could engage in without risking a permanent disability. Tom described being "commandeered" into this sport, rather than it being the sport of his choosing, yet he excelled and was selected to compete for Australia while at high school.

Olympic Disappointment.   A couple of moments, in particular, provide critical insight into why the coach has been so driven to be a successful Olympic coach; why he invests so much time and effort into his athletes to help them succeed. Tom never competed at the Olympics, despite twice being on the precipice of making the team. In the first instance, the participant coach was qualified and selected but denied the opportunity to attend. On the second attempt at Olympic selection, Tom described how he under-performed at the trials, noting, "I should have made it, but I [performed] poorly." The participant coach described not competing at the Olympics as an athlete as one of his greatest disappointments in life.

> As an [athlete in a specific sport] in [Olympic year], not making the Olympic team…I wanted to go out and kill someone. I remember putting my fist through the bathroom at home at Mum's place. You know, when you put in the hours of preparation, the early morning get ups, the hard work you did, and then you line up and you don't execute a good race…it can be very, very frustrating. I was pissed off that I hadn't made the team.

Tom further described how his failure served as a major "catalyst" for his drive to make it to the Olympics "in some way, shape, or form". It is clear from Tom's words that even though he did not make it as an athlete, he was determined to make it somehow. He further explained that because he was "not good enough to go, and didn't get picked" it fueled his "passion for the Olympics".

These near misses and disappointments are mentioned by the coach as the driving force behind why it is so important for him to make his athletes as successful as possible. It appears that the coach's own perceived inadequacies at the time he was trialing for the Olympics, have driven him to try to use his position (and power) as a coach to ensure that his athletes are better prepared than he was. This might explain why he invests his time and effort so heavily in his coaching, and why he is so driven to see his athletes excel and reach their full potential, because he perceives that he never did, and if he had, he would have been an Olympian as an athlete.

Coach Chapters

The Reluctant Coach.   Tom ended his sporting career post that Olympic year, going to university in the US, and later Australia, to study physical education. While studying, Tom was offered a job as a coach at a large pool in a major metropolitan city. Initially he had no intention of becoming a coach, "I'd had enough of [sport]", he thought, "I need to go get myself a bit of a career." It is evident from Tom's comments that becoming a [sport] coach was not something he always dreamed about, and at the time he viewed it as "not being looked upon favorably…being a Physical Education teacher was viewed much better." Eventually, the coach was convinced to take the job as a coach, and began his coaching career. The fact that someone who was "commandeered" into his sport as an athlete, then reluctantly took a coaching job he had no real desire to do at the time, and then has become a successful Olympic coach may challenge intuitive reasoning. Perhaps a person does not have to have "wanted it their whole life" or "eat, sleep, and breathe it since birth" to be a great coach, or likewise, a great athlete. Unique life experiences, coupled with broad personality traits may be better indicators than how much someone wants the job, at least initially.

Finding His Feet.   Tom described feeling a sense of low competence when starting as a [sport] coach for the first time; "I had no idea what I was doing." He added that he drew on the experiences of his former coaches, and used a method of trial and error to find his best approach. By Tom's own perception, he wasn't an excellent coach from the outset, "I had a big L-plate [Learning to drive a car] on for the first three years that I was coaching." He explained how it was only through meeting other top-level coaches and learning from them, that he really started to improve as a coach, stating, "You learn from people who you respect and appreciate what they've done", and that it "pieced together for me a lot clearer picture of what I needed to do as a coach." Tom values learning from others with experience, especially those whom have "done it before"; for example, "how they coach (technique, periodization)… and how they communicate to others; [for example] providing feedback to athletes… the art of communication". Tom spoke of the sage advice he received from an experienced coach: "you need to see the train wreck coming before it happens" that reinforced for

him "the need to address issues early with athletes". His previous athletic experiences provided some foundation for understanding how to help, challenge, inspire, and guide his athletes.

Critical Events

Children.   Tom describes the most important highlight of his life as having two daughters. He expressed that having two girls has helped him better "communicate" (relate) to his female athletes; another life experience that has shaped him to be the coach that he has become. He mentioned how the demands of his job often make it difficult to spend as much time with his family as he would like, but despite his investment in his job, he still values them as the most important in his life. Tom's family appears to keep him grounded; having that balance and something to go home to seems to hold him in better stead when he goes to work. His passion for work is strong; however, he is mindful of the importance of his family in his life. His family provides him with another dimension to whom he is that he values and protects.

Olympic Gold.   Tom described the greatest moment of his professional career as leading one of his athletes to win gold at the [year] Olympic games.

> It is something that you cherish and nobody can ever take it away from [the athlete] or from me. It's just a little bit below having the kids. The kids are the definite highlight, but that is not far behind.

The joy Tom experienced when his athlete won gold appears to have served as a sort of redemption after his own personal near misses. He also expressed his satisfaction with the role he played to help instill belief in his gold-medal winning athlete.

> Just seeing the negativity X had to that event even just 12 months before the Olympics and how it just all turned around – she was able to start committing more, she bought into it more…

It appears that the coach takes great pride in helping people excel and reach their full potential, perhaps because of his failure to do so in his own sporting career. This is consistent with his perspective on what makes him, among others who did not quite "make it", a great coach.

> The best coaches are often the ones that didn't really make it because they are a little more in tune or desperate to get people 'there', whereas the really gifted athletes can't understand why you can't get a drill and you just don't get things. Like you don't see too many great athletes in [sport] go on and be great coaches.

Tom also describes in some depth how he coped with the onset of this athlete's medical difficulties (fever), and as a result, emotional breakdown before the second Olympic final (as prerace favourite) approximately 80 minutes before the final. Having removed the athlete from the doctor and taken the athlete to a private space, Tom describes how he clarified the athlete's concerns (i.e., not being 100% ready for a race that the athlete is expected to win). Tom describes how he was able to utilise and draw upon examples of athletes (especially within the sport) who had overcome adversity to perform at critical moments, and in particular with the core message "you don't have to be 100% health wise to [perform] fast". For this athlete, Tom was able to maintain a sense of perspective at a crucial time while also getting the athlete to laugh and release some of the emotional tension. He also drew upon the history of working with this athlete over the years saying:

> "[athlete], you've already won an Olympic gold medal…I never would have thought when you first came to me as a 15 year old that you have achieved an Olympic gold medal. It doesn't matter what you do in this (event), but what I want you to do is to finish that race… and say to yourself 'there is no way in God's earth I could have gone any faster than what I did here…I've extracted everything out of myself with the physical condition that I am in now'. I don't care where you finish the race, but you finish the race because four years is a long time till the next one. You can't have regret at the end".

This was coupled with examples of reinforcing self-belief (i.e., telling the athlete what they had done to give themselves the opportunity to win, key performance statistics) and refocussing techniques (motivational focus—"this event is happening now! It won't be rescheduled because you are not ready"). Eighty minutes later the athlete wins a second gold medal. Indeed, the coach perceives that his experiences as an athlete who didn't fulfill his potential, his life narrative, has led him to become the successful coach he is.

I Want To Be Special

Another theme of Tom's life narrative appears to relate to being special. He noted how one of the highlights of his childhood and youth was when he was one of the first school-aged athletes to win multiple Australian Open championships. Tom noted how the desire to be a trendsetter motivated his coaching ambitions.

> So when I became a coach, I set a goal for myself where I wanted to be a dual – an Australian represented [athlete] and an Australian representative coach [same sport] …when I first did it nobody else had really done it. It made me feel good.

Perhaps linked to his ambitions to be 'special', is his desire to prove people wrong: "Somebody tells me I can't do something…Proving people wrong is what stimulates me". Succeeding at challenging tasks is something that obviously motivates the coach, and there are few more

difficult things than achieving an Olympic gold medal. The coach was determined to make it there in "some way, shape or form". Understanding *why* he was so determined to do so is a key aspect of this coach's narrative identity. We turn to this issue next.

For Dad

Tom identified that the biggest regret of his childhood is that he never got to play [his father's sport]. As mentioned earlier, the coach's disability meant that his doctor (uncle) ruled him out of any contact sport, especially [sport]. He reported that his father was a good [sport] player, and both he and the coach wanted him to play [sport].

> (Dad was) probably more upset that I couldn't play [sport] than I was. So I wanted to play because Dad wanted me to and it was also something I wanted to do because I thought it was something that I could do a good job of. That was probably the biggest regret.

It appears evident from the life story interview that Tom valued his father's opinion highly, and wanted to make him proud, but he had the possibility of doing that via [sport] stripped away through no fault of his own. He had to find another way to make his father proud, and he did; being the best [athlete] and coach he could be. A driving force behind the way he works or invests in his coaching was to continue to make his father proud. Tom spoke about how his father's death (5 years before the interview) was "bad", and that it is a still difficult and emotive subject for him.

Overview of the Life Story

From the life story interview, we discover that Tom was born to immigrant parents, with strong religious views and structured lives. His parents fostered strong familial relationships and he remains close to parents and siblings, although his father has passed away. He described having two children as helping him as a coach and reinforces the importance of family in his life. "Sport is important for me, but I just see it's a job, it's a passion, and everything else. But the family to me is always the most important." As a young child, Tom experienced grief through the loss of a sister and the understandable emotional loss of family (an event that emphasized the importance of family to him). He is the only son. Tom was keen to emulate his father's sporting success. Unfortunately, Tom was unable to play his father's sport due to an injury he incurred at a young age. Hence, Tom was commandeered into the sport he played and now coaches. He was highly successful as a junior and continued to be successful as a senior athlete, representing Australia in several competitions. Nevertheless, the lowest point were the losses of his sister then father. Another low point in his life was not making the Olympic team on two occasions but for different reasons. His disappointment in nonselection was reflected in his comment: "I hardly watched the Olympics...I was shitty...not making the [Olympic] team...I wanted to

kill someone". A poignant feature of Tom's life story interview is that he mentions the emotional loss of his sister and father in the same category as not making it to the Olympics. This significant disappointment (as an athlete) reportedly fuelled his desire to be a successful coach, although it still affects him today ("[Not making the Olympic team] still eats at me now. I desperately wanted to make an Olympic team. It's the pinnacle and I didn't achieve it. I felt I'd failed."). He wanted to be an Olympian, and if not as an athlete, then as a coach. Tom reported that he was a better coach as a result of his athletic disappointments. So, he set himself a goal to be the first dual Australian representative—athlete and coach. "It made me feel good."

When asked how these experiences influence him now, he replied, "It makes me more desperate to have success with the [athletes]...I am like a bad parent. If I am looking after an [athlete], I am a coach that feels very, very, responsible for their result. I don't just say 'Oh well bad luck' it eats at me when the [athletes] don't perform at the level I know they can." Tom takes his work seriously and focuses on his pivotal role in developing his athletes:

> "through everything that I do I can try and get these kids to improve…. How can I make them go faster? It's all I think about… Improvement is the word… it's getting the best out of the kids… I like to be very prepared as a coach…preparation, preparation, preparation…[for athletes] there is no guarantee, but you are putting yourself in a position to perform well… consistency is the key…I'm enthusiastic, and I try to create enthusiasm in the workplace, so everyone feels part of the group and everyone is trying to get the best out of themselves."

These insights reflect the strong emotional attachment and energy Tom has for winning and avoiding the disappointments (for himself and others under his influence) linked to his own past. Tom reported he was achievement goal driven at an early age; he always set himself "little goals" to achieve. Generally achieving something people haven't done before both "motivates and stimulates" Tom. However, the thing that most stimulates him is when "somebody tells me that it can't be done". Tom reported using this strategy as a coach to motivate his athletes. However, it is also one that reportedly connects with his memories as a young child, being categorically told he could not follow his father's footsteps on medical grounds.

Discussion

Understanding the Coach as a Whole Person

In the current study, Tom's data were examined across the multiple layers of McAdams' personality framework, which represents the psychology of people from three disparate ontological perspectives—the self as a social

actor (represented in this study by the Big Five traits), motivated agent (personal strivings), and autobiographical author (narrative identity). Specifically, McAdams' framework was used to conceptualize, study, and interpret data in the current study. With each successive layer, new information was uncovered about Tom that respectively helped us to build an emerging portrait of his personality that we used to appreciate him as a coach from a whole person perspective. Through the Big Five taxonomy, we initially learned about the type of person Tom is. Next, his personal strivings provided deeper insight about the motivational agenda underpinning his priorities as a coach and why he works so diligently in this role and context. Lastly, the analysis of Tom's life-story interview offered a narrative perspective of the standout autobiographical life events he has endured, and carved meaning from, that have shaped the social actor and motivated agent he is today (Carless & Douglas, 2011; McAdams, 2013). Overall, exploring Tom' personality through McAdams' integrated framework allowed us to understand him across three distinctive epistemological frames that together provide a comprehensive insight to who he thinks he is and why he is that way. It permitted the integration of data from the broadest characteristics, to the recurring goals and values he strives for in his everyday coaching, and finally, the context in which he makes sense of his past, present, and future life that culminate in his narrative identity.

As a social actor, compared with the average person, Tom can broadly be described as being highly agreeable (cf., Becker, 2009), highly conscientious (cf., Becker, 2009; Nash & Sproule, 2009), open (cf., Werthner & Trudel, 2009), and low in neuroticism (cf., Olusoga, et al., 2012). This trait profile depicts the broad structure of his personality and perceived reputation, and reflects several of the Big Five traits of successful athletes (e.g., high conscientiousness, low neuroticism, Allen et al., 2011) and other high performing leaders (Bligh, 2009). While valuable for setting expectations for how Tom typically behaves across time and context, the Big Five are de-contextualized and comparative to societal norms (McAdams, 1995). That is, they can only tell us so much; for instance, they do not inform us of what motivates Tom in his coaching or what he is trying to consistently accomplish in this role.

However, such questions are addressed at the next layer of personality, whereby the collection of Tom's personal strivings, using Emmon's (1989) personality striving task, helped us to appreciate him as a motivated agent who pursues valued goals. We discovered that Tom aims to inspire, challenge, educate, and improve his athletes (e.g., Gilbert, Nater, Siwik & Gallimore, 2010), create a winning culture, and let no one distract him away from his path. Through content analysis and coding, these strivings emphasized two primary motivational themes: (a) *achievement*; he aims to help his athletes to be successful, and thus he is also successful in developing them, and (b) *power*; he aims to use his position of influence as coach to positively impact his athletes'

development (e.g., Gilbert et al., 2010). These two themes of achievement and power are associated with his agency in demonstrating mastery and competence in a role that he values (Deci & Ryan, 1985; McAdams, 2015; White, 1959). The findings derived from the strivings matrix further indicated that Tom is highly committed to fulfilling these goals on a daily basis, despite acknowledging their challenging nature.

It has been suggested that people high in conscientiousness tend to have personal strivings that emphasise achievement and power (Bleidorn, Kandler, Hulsheger, Riemann, Angleitner, & Spinath, 2010). Tom's desire for these motivational themes in his coaching suggest that he understands the importance of developing adaptive relationships with his athletes (Chan & Mallett, 2011; Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Gilbert & Côté, 2013) to achieve the successful athlete performance outcomes that, in turn, give him the success he craves as a coach. Indeed, Tom understands that he needs to work effectively (i.e., interpersonally) with his athletes to be successful as a coach, which may be a reflection of his high scores for agreeableness on the NEO FFI-3. As an illustrative construct of McAdams' second layer of personality—characteristic adaptations—the information acquired from Tom's responses to the personal strivings task have provided a more in-depth and thicker description of his personality. As a social actor, we initially described Tom through the Big Five traits, but we now know him a little better; in particular, we have discovered his personality from the psychological standpoint of a motivated agent, which has helped us identify what Tom essentially wants in his role as a coach, and that he is highly motivated to achieve his personal goals in coaching.

In addition to understanding Tom as a social actor and motivated agent, we also learned about who he is, as a person and coach, through analysis of his narrative identity and life story interview. Here, Tom was asked to derive a sense of meaning and purpose from the reported events and perceived chapters of his life. Representing McAdams' third layer of personality, this process allowed us to delve into Tom's unique understanding of himself as an autobiographical author and to appreciate how he *structures* his own life story, providing insights of the underlying narrative(s) he is trying to 'live out' in his life (McAdams, 2015; Zehntner & McMahon, 2015).

From Tom's interview, a clear theme to have emerged was that he tells a *redemptive story*. Redemptive stories track narratives that move from a demonstrably negative situation to an especially positive one (McAdams, 2015); they speak of a protagonist that endures suffering of one kind or another, but eventually that suffering leads to a positive outcome. What is relevant here is that the narrator of redemptive stories describes an explicit causal link between prior negative events and the resultant enhancement or growth, whereby suffering (bad) is redeemed (turned into good). In Tom's case, he looks back on his childhood and early adulthood and sees a person deprived of opportunity (e.g., because of disability, political circumstances that denied his Olympic

chance) and who experienced agonizing sporting failure (despite his clear potential for a second opportunity to be an Olympic athlete) and personal losses (e.g., his sister's untimely death). These significant disappointments fuelled his desire to be a highly successful coach (Carter & Bloom, 2009), and appear to remain deep in his psyche. For instance, it was apparent that not playing the sport his father did and not making the Olympic team as an athlete still profoundly affects him today. However, through various circumstances and positive influences (e.g., having good coaching mentors, family support), he overcomes these challenges and setbacks to eventually reach the ultimate prize (i.e., winning Olympic gold as a coach), in doing so, attributing (i.e., autobiographically reasoning) his negative setbacks and episodes with positive meaning outcomes.

Implied in the above discussions, it is clear that being an Olympic champion is an archetypal image continually recurring throughout Tom's life story. Beyond the personal strivings reported thus far (a feature of Tom's characteristic adaptations), Tom's recollections of wanting to be an Olympic athlete, and later coach, emphasize the importance and centrality of this goal in his narrative identity. As previously acknowledged, personal strivings are personality constructs that indicate what a person wants to do. Specifically, they are unifying constructs (Emmons, 1989) that bring together what may be phenotypically different goals or actions around a common quality or theme. Hence, a striving can be achieved or satisfied in a variety of ways through any one of a number of concrete goals (e.g., Olympic success). For Tom, as an athlete, he failed or was denied the opportunity to satisfy his striving of Olympic success. But, as a coach, we learn through his life story that he has had the chance to achieve this goal through other means—his athletes—and he appears to have redirected his passion for success in this pursuit toward helping these individuals. Hence, we can derive that a core feature of his personality is his desire to promote his own (Olympic dream) self-interests by promoting the (Olympic dream) interests of others (cf. Frimer, Walker, Dunlop, Lee, & Riches, 2011).

In making sense of his own life, Tom also draws upon particular redemptive themes. Stories of redemption can be told in different ways (e.g., a story of emancipation, upward mobility, or enlightenment; see McAdams, 2015). In moving from suffering to prominent life outcomes, Tom's life story reflects themes of *atonement*, whereby the 'failure' he once attributed to himself as an athlete eventually 'comes good', in the end, as a coach. Underpinning this theme of atonement in Tom's life story is his desire to feel 'special', and specifically, to win the admiration of his father ("I wanted to play because Dad wanted me to"). Being successful in sport meant (and means) a lot to Tom for reasons that relate to the inherent satisfaction achievement in this domain gives him, but also, because of the close ties sport has to fatherly approval.

The findings from Tom's life story interview suggest that he is obsessively passionate about coaching and his desire to feel special, coupled with his need to help others achieve and redeem what he himself did not achieve, appears to be a driving force beneath his passion for success in coaching. His life story is essentially reminiscent of a commitment script (Tomkins, 1987)—a quest to reach the Olympic games, and the ultimate prize of winning gold that, once achieved, asserts his competence and is something that nobody can ever take away from him. Tom wants to be special, not just calling himself an Olympian, but highly successful (i.e., winning gold medals), which is an attitude consistent with successful elite athletes (cf., Mallett & Hanrahan, 2004). His desperation to "get there" also fuels his desire to be a highly successful coach (Jenkins, 2015). As the protagonist and narrator of his personal life story, Tom seeks to prove his worth through passion, mastery, and ultimately success; he wants *his* athletes to become successful by learning from the mistakes he made as an athlete that, in turn, makes him successful in the international arena, and therefore, special. However, while his narrative identity is indicative of atonement, told through a life story highlighting themes of reparation and amending his wrongs, there is a sense that the perceived failure he experienced in not making the Olympic team as an athlete is never quite fulfilled or subsides with time despite the various accolades he has since achieved as a coach (e.g., "[It] still eats at me now…It's the pinnacle and I didn't achieve it"). As someone surrounded by future Olympic hopefuls, who are both a mechanism for his future success, but equally, a continuous reminder of his own past and unwanted failings, Tom remains obsessive in his pursuit to keep winning.

This case study provided some insight into an understanding of this successful coach. In particular, how the three personality layers of McAdams' framework integrate and help build a comprehensive portrayal of a highly successful coach in sport. This study showed how this individual is similar to others in some respects (e.g., dispositional traits), but at the same time, totally unique (e.g., in terms of his motives and life narrative) (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1953; McAdams & Pals, 2006). McAdams' framework of personality was useful in gradually building up a unique psychological portrait that represents (i) the kind of person this coach is; (ii) what he wants; and (iii) who he is. This portrait offers a more holistic perspective of performers in sport that tries to capture the whole person, and an outlook that moves significantly beyond customary perspectives in sport and coaching psychology practice to understanding performers in this domain. Too often, a narrow focus on traits reduces the complexity inherent in people, which do little to inform the policy and practice related to the professionalization of sports coaching. In this case study, complementary data from different epistemological frames enabled the production of a coherent story that we consider generative in understanding a coach and how he might fit into a particular coaching setting.

On the basis of the data collected, we concluded that: Tom has a clear vision of the end product and some core values (e.g., care for others, work ethic) that frame

his coaching practice to plan and implement the necessary detail to get an athlete to achieve their potential (cf., Gilbert et al., 2010; Johnson, Martin, Palmer, Watson, & Ramsey, 2013; Lee, Kim, & Kang, 2013); he has a thirst for knowledge and continues to learn—he values knowledgeable and experienced coaches who have been successful and he is a good student of coaching (cf., Mallett, Rossi, Rynne, & Tinning, 2016; Nash & Sproule, 2009; Rossi, Rynne, & Rabjohns, 2016; Werthner & Trudel, 2009); he likely values and demonstrates diligence in preparation and in his expectations of the athletes if they want to be successful (cf., Gilbert et al., 2010; Olusoga et al., 2012); he models appropriate behaviors to his athletes; he is obsessively passionate (cf., Nash & Sproule, 2009) in an adaptive way in what he does and his identity is tied to being an Olympian and a successful one (multiple gold medal winning coach); he has developed his ability to care for and learn from the athletes and individualize coaching to meet the unique needs of each athlete (cf., Gilbert et al., 2010; Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2010; Vallée & Bloom, 2005; Werthner & Trudel, 2009); he is able to communicate with his athletes on a level that is impactful (i.e., increasing probability of high performance outcomes) during periods of stress/pressure, which is an example of his ability to maintain athlete self-belief and he is good at getting people to perform when it matters—indeed he showed decisive and solution-focused leadership (cf. Din, Paskevich, Gabriele, & Werthner, 2015; Jones et al., 2010; Olusoga et al., 2012; Potrac, Jones, & Armour, 2012) that did not emphasize winning (Din, et al., 2015). Fundamentally, being successful as a coach is a deeply personal matter that forms the very fabric of his identity and is, to some extent, an antidote to his perceived failings as an athlete.

Although the data collected in this study provided a deep insight into this successful coach, future research might consider complementary data from athletes of these consistently successful international coaches. These data might include observer reports (e.g., using the NEO-FFI-3 Form R) or a semistructured interview that seeks to capture a deeper understanding of these coaches. These complementary data might provide another "truth" to understanding these successful coaches in understanding the impact of their coaching from the athletes' experiential perspective (cf. Becker, 2009). Alternatively, athletes' data might provide coherence to a coach's story.

It is evident that there is more information and context to be integrated with the addition of each layer of data acquired using McAdams' framework. However, how might this in-depth information be used to inform decision-making in the identification, recruitment and development of future high performance coaches? It is the authors' belief that McAdams' framework, adapted to research as in this study, allows us to know a person at deeper level. The addition of the personal strivings, and life narrative data, to go with the broad dispositional traits, give a clearer picture as to how a coach might "fit" in a particular high performance sporting setting. For example, if there is a clear understanding of the organizational environment that a coach is being interviewed for, then this framework can provide valuable information about a coach that goes past the usual recommendations and personality profiles that are often used in human resource. Using theoretical models, such as Schein's (1990) framework of organisational culture, can provide a deep understanding of specific high performance sporting contexts (e.g., Coulter, Mallett, & Singer, 2016) that might complement a deep understanding of the coach that subsequently fosters a successful coach-sport organisational fit. You can never know everything about a person but now there are integrative and more comprehensive research approaches to know someone at a deeper, meaningful level.

On the basis of the findings, we make two tentative suggestions for coaches and coach developers. First, understanding coaches beyond traits provides a deeper understanding of their personalities that has the potential to better understand the person behind the coach. Moving beyond a reliance on traits is important to understand the person; specifically, how they behave in specific situations (e.g., how he dealt with a stressed athlete) and how they made sense of their lived experiences. Second, the importance of an appropriate coach-organisational fit is essential to the ongoing development of all actors in the sporting context (Mallett & Lara-Bercial, in press). In that regard, the comprehensive profiling of a coach should enhance the likelihood of recruiting and developing a coach who fits an organizational setting and culture. However, key personnel should have clarity about the culture of their organization and to recruit a coach who culturally fits that organisation.

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