

VIDEO 1:

SLIDE 1

I will try to offer some first fragments of reflection to connect 3 things:

on the one hand **the formative logic** that, in Baskin, is based on 3 Modules (a training structure designed in 3 Modules)

... structure that may change over time, but I hope that the formative logic will not change too much;

on the other hand, **the identity of Baskin** made of 3 dimensions that can be recognized; 3 identities that intertwine with each other and that, together, form a single thing ...

which is Baskin;

and then (third thing to which I would like to bring our attention in this short speech), it is about **the commitment to seek balances**, not always easy to find, because behind this search for balances, there are tensions that you need to know how to see them, how to recognize them... so without deny them.

I will then try to put these 3 things in relation. Because they are fundamentally in relation and actually reveal **3 modes of expression of ethics in Baskin**. All 3 very important, so important that none of them can be forgotten...

Otherwise, there is a risk of partly frustrating the other modes.

SLIDE 2

But first, I would like to start from a premise.

Maybe because a speech without premises, for me, is a bit like Baskin without the ball... (or Life without salt). Sometimes, I make preambles that last longer than the main speech! :) But this time I don't.

I just would like to begin immediately with a very difficult subject... (no progression, no gradualism...no quiet walk, whistling on the way to reach the foot of the mountain; no, we start immediately uphill, and even abruptly!) by approaching 2 words: "competition" and "ethics". We could use other words to lead the same speech, but these already give a good idea of what we want to try to focus with you.

So I would like to evoke, in the background of my speech, this difficult theme of ETHICS IN BASKIN, focusing more particularly on some aspects of INCLUSIVE ETHICS within the sport COMPETITION.

And I will do it by simply formulating some INITIAL QUESTIONS:

1) Why do we talk about "ethics" and "competition"? (first question)

2) Isn't Baskin already "ethical" in itself? (second question)

Or maybe we talk about that because...

3) It is maybe the competition that pushes us to put ethics in brackets? (third question)

Because in the end we can ask ourselves:

4) Are inclusive logic and competitive logic really compatible? or not ? (fourth question)

5) On what does the ethics in Baskin depend (in the end) ? (fifth question)

So here is our starting point: some first questions.

Obviously, there will be others that will emerge during the speech. Also because, if our point of departure are questions, our point of arrival will not necessarily be answers. On the contrary...

→ However, we will really try to give some elements of answer. But we will also try, above all perhaps, to stimulate the reflection of those who are passionate about Baskin... so that he himself, she herself, can renew the questions that are already being asked (hopefully, at least).

But before we get to the heart of our subject, let's ask ourselves quickly: **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ETHICS ?**

Here, even if I don't want to reduce it to a game of definitions... we can evoke some evocative tracks.

_ One of the most classic definitions is this: "Ethics is the set of principles that guide human behavior in respect of certain values". OK... perhaps we are not much more advanced... but the question of "**guiding principles**" is interesting. We can keep it in mind.

_ To me, I like to say that "ethics" is a "**posture**"... or the attempt to assume this posture. But what is this posture favored by? I believe that it is favored by **a reflective attitude** (about oneself) **oriented to the common good**.

_ And in this sense, let's add a third track to better understand what ethics can be: I think we can say that it is fundamentally **the search for a reasoned balance**.

By this, I do not mean that the balance is always "in the middle", as a sort of arithmetic mean between the opposite extreme positions. Absolutely not! This (in some cases at least) would correspond only to a "tepid" posture, not very brave, sometimes discreetly vomiting... if you allow me this refined image. Exactly: a little lukewarm vomit (ups! excuse me), a tepid, soft, neutral posture, just at a fair distance of too marked antagonistic positions. No. This is not the ethical posture of which I speak. But no less it is a matter of searching for a reasoned balance, taking into account the contradictory tensions that cross us all. Because this posture is stimulating, it is authentic, it is beautiful!!! It is beautiful to engage in this search for balance.

_ And here I come to the last track or definition: the poet Pierre Reverdy used to say "Ethics is a bit like **the aesthetics of the inside**".

But this is not the time to meditate... So I'll let you play with this premise on your own when you have a moment to dedicate to these reflections... I told you that the premises were like Baskin's ball for me...! :)

SLIDE 3

Here we are! Finally we begin!

The training course for aspiring coaches is structured in 3 Modules.

These 3 Modules are used to try to get the trainees into **3 different points of view**:

- A.** understanding the GAME (and the spirit of the game), for the first point of view;
- B.** understanding the TRAINING (and the spirit of the training), for the second point of view;
- C.** understanding the COMPETITION (and the spirit of competition) for the third point of view.

Trainees (participants, learners) must experience these fundamental changes of viewpoint. They must understand that there are 3 fundamentally different perspectives on Baskin and that they must learn to cultivate all three.

SLIDE 4

In fact, it is important in my opinion to reflect for a moment on this structure. And to do so, I propose to use a metaphor: **THE METAPHOR OF THEATER!** Like any metaphor, it does not perfectly reflect reality. In fact, it is not reality: it is only a metaphor. So, it can certainly have some limits as an object of comparison with reality: theater is not sport, and sport is not theater. But I do believe that the theatrical metaphor can be particularly suggestive to talk about Baskin and to understand the formative logic on which I would like to bring your attention.

So: what does each Module consist of?

A. The Module 1 (centered on the specific GAME) presents... a new sports PRODUCT designed for everyone.

In this Module, it is simply a question of understanding the regulatory architecture of this new sport, its internal logic and philosophy.

Within our metaphor, we are talking here about the work, the artwork, the opera (the work of some author, which was written in black and white... exactly like the game rules that are written in an official document and which represent the shared cultural object in the community of practice).

B. Then there is the Module 2 (centered on TRAINING) which presents no longer the product, but the PROCESS that takes place somehow behind the scenes (i.e. between the coach and his team, in a somehow private dimension, almost intimate, and in any case always reserved to the same actors, players and coaches, in this unique and singular microcosm of personalities and relationships always particular). And what is this process for a coach in the end? It is the process that tries to interpret and give life to the product of Baskin (the written work). So the original work is unique, but the process of interpretation of it is always different, because it is made by a person always different (the coach) in front of a group of people always particular (the players).

These interpretations are the result of a new type of pedagogical engineering: it is not anymore the multi-year one that has gradually led to the crystallization of the Baskin work (with a more or less stabilized identity), but this time it is about a weekly commitment that always tries to renew the understanding of the Baskin work to improve collectively its local interpretation.

C. The Module 3 instead (a little more centered on COMPETITION, or on the context that allows competition) focuses on the PRESENTATION to the world of this new sport product and the interpretation that each team has made of it locally.

And this symbolic moment - very ritualized - is a PUBLIC moment (in which participants are no longer folded in their own gym during training, within their own team, far away from outside eyes). It is an important, decisive public moment. It is a moment of presentation or representation, a moment of performance in the sense of "mise-en-scène" or staging. It's a moment in which the actors are committed to present to everyone, with pride, the "best" of Baskin (the best as a product for spectators who do not yet know it, but the best also as a process, as a personal interpretation of the product for spectators who perhaps already know it, appreciate it and know how to grasp these nuances).

From this point of view, we can better understand why the competition offers a precious opportunity, not only to compete with other people, but also to "represent" ourselves (as coaches and as players) on a public stage open to the world. It is a precious occasion in which the Other becomes the one who allows the realization of this unique and unrepeatable moment. The opponent in this sense is an indispensable partner, another actor who plays his part to give rise, together with us, to this potentially wonderful show that we want to offer to the world, with pride and humility: the pride of what we do with commitment and dedication; and the humility of those who are aware that they have to protect not only their own little team, but also a wider cultural project.

VIDEO 2:

SLIDE 5

Now that we have clarified the logic of this formative structuring in 3 parts, we can begin to make the bridges that we announced in the title of the speech. Firstly, a way of presenting Baskin is to evoke an interweaving of 3 fundamental dimensions of identity, 3 pillars that must not be missing to fully express what Baskin is.

A. The first identity component of Baskin is SPORT:

- We can say that it is first of all a sporting discipline, a real sport, with its own regulatory codification, which represents the common language between all the actors involved in its practice, starting with the players.
- Baskin offers first of all an opportunity to enjoy, to have fun, and offers it to ALL, through a direct involvement in this codified experience: an experience that is both cooperative and competitive: in fact it is a team sport.

B. The second identity component of Baskin is EDUCATION:

- Baskin is an educational tool, it represents a tool, a means, an operational strategy available to achieve educational goals.
- With this word "education", one must understand a very broad, deep, radical sense in some ways.
- It is not a matter of enclosing "education" within the school world; it is a process that concerns everyone, children and adults, players and coaches....
- It is necessary to understand "education" in its highest, noblest sense, as a "process of humanization", i.e. a process that allows us to grow humanly, to become a little better as people, a process that gives us opportunities for personal growth, a process that believes and invests in the possibility of learning for all (*contributing to humanizing our relationship to the world, to life, to others*)

As the great German philosopher Hannah Arendt says: "Education is the moment that decides whether we love the world enough to take responsibility for it. »

C. The third component of Baskin's identity (the one that is most difficult to fully understand in my opinion) is CULTURE:

- Baskin is a cultural project. It aims not only to make people enjoy or grow, individually, but also to change the world (in its small way, of course, but still to change the world), the world in which we all live, to make it better, more welcoming, more liveable, more beautiful ... helping us to build a common cultural horizon.

And to change the world, the Baskin has two main "weapons" at its disposal:

- * the first is obviously the **cultural change**, that is its ability to foster the maturation of a new sensibility, a new approach, a new semantic grid with respect to what we mean by "excellence", "merit", "performance", but also with respect to what we mean by "fragility": observing a Baskin game leads more or less inevitably to redefine these key concepts;
 - * the second "weapon" (in addition to cultural change) is the **social, organizational, institutional change**, that is the ability of Baskin to favor much more concretely the construction of new collaborations, new partnerships, between areas that tended not to communicate with each other (eg. associations specializing in disability and ordinary sports contexts).
- Therefore, a more anthropological change (linked to the renewal of cultural models) and a more sociological change (linked to the renewal of social configurations).

SLIDE 6

Now, we can finally make the last bridge we were saying, starting from the 3 Training Modules and the 3 complementary identities of Baskin. In fact, let's see now 3 kinds of SEARCH FOR BALANCE that we're going to understand better. They are somehow **3 different ways, all of them indispensable, of applying inclusive ethics** in Baskin:

- 1) the first is found in the architecture of the game itself, and one could speak of "search for justice", "SEARCH FOR FAIRNESS" as a commitment that guided the design of the Baskin's rules;
- 2) the second is manifested in the sphere of training and, as we shall see, one could speak of "SEARCH FOR FULLNESS", "search for value", for "realness", in the sense of the search for the real and full value of the people involved in playing Baskin: a search for authenticity and completeness);
- 3) and the third is expressed in the game and, in this case, one could speak of "SEARCH FOR BEAUTIFULNESS", search for pleasantness, meaning here the commitment to offer everyone the most beautiful, pleasant and enjoyable spectacle possible (*trying to radiate - through a practical example - the splendour of inclusive culture!*).

So, let's try to clarify a bit better what we mean in each of these 3 modes.

A. The first form of expression of inclusive ethics in Baskin is simply found in its regulatory structure. How so? Because the Rules are a coding effort (written in black on white) that tries to guarantee the **sporting EQUITY** *upstream* (at source); therefore, we do not try to limit *downstream* the lack of sporting equity that a traditional sport tends to produce; we tackle the problem upstream, in the design phase of the activity itself: it is the ethics of "design for all"; and in Baskin it takes the form - let's say - of the 5 roles differentiation.

If the watchword is **Equity**, there are several other keywords, including "design" (as we have already said) but even before "*recognition*", because it is necessary to recognize the diversity of starting points between people (objectively speaking).

Here, the fundamental tension that emerges, of which we must become aware because it tends to guide the search for balance during this phase of *recognition of the diversity of people and design of the activity*, is the tension that opposes:

_ on the one hand the desire for FREEDOM, or rather the desire to enhance freedom in the game, that is the freedom of expression of sporting excellence (the freedom to excel!).

_ on the other hand, the OBLIGATION, the rule, the law, the binding framework within which one can move, setting limits to the expression of freedom, for a simple reason: to affirm the rights of all, and therefore the obligation to protect individual fragility, to avoid being crushed by the freedom of others.

This is therefore the first search for balance (commitment to "**seek what is fair**" related to justice and rights), which the rules of Baskin well illustrate and that you must therefore know how to safeguard.

The role of the trainer from this point of view is called into play to transmit the desire and awareness of having to guard this precious asset, guarding the Baskin that was designed for all to enhance upstream sporting fairness (And even if it still evolves, with small revisions of the Rules, this evolution is always aimed at this purpose). The coach must understand this, and therefore the trainer must deeply internalize it.

B. The second mode of expression of inclusive ethics in Baskin corresponds to another type of commitment, closer to what we ask a coach to put on the field. Because with regard to the first type of commitment, applied to the Rules themselves, the coach is not directly involved in the design work but only in understanding and protecting the work that has been written in a logic of fairness. Instead, in this case, the coach is called to manifest EMPATHY within his educational role towards his players.

He is asked to assume a function of careful mediation between the Baskin (as a product) and its players, i.e. the people who give life to the work, taking care of the personal and sporting growth of each and every one.

Here, several keywords have already popped up. If the watchword is **Empathy**, this attitude can and must be manifested in training through a posture of active observation and listening to one's team.

Here, the tension that emerges, of which one must become aware (because it can and must guide another search for balance), is the tension that opposes:

_ on the one hand the objective progress of the team in terms of sports performance, and therefore the progress of individual performance but always oriented towards the constant optimization of collective progress. The improvement of one's skills (as a player) is somehow measured by the impact it generates on collective performance. Therefore, from the individual point of view, the will to "self-overcome" is promoted, and this will tends to make sense only within the objective progress of the team.

_ and on the other hand, the personal accomplishment (deeply subjective) of each player, in terms of human growth, psycho-physical well-being, emotional well-being, relational well-being, personal satisfaction, happiness and fun within that experience lived in the gym together with other teammates; an experience that can represent for everyone a unique and precious moment of the week, an intense parenthesis of conviviality. Here the driving force is no longer so much the self-overcoming as a player (for the objective progress of the team), but the self-fulfillment, satisfaction, one's own growth as a person.

Well, the coach finds himself caught in this tension, because he is called to protect both dimensions, without one sacrificing the other. And the 2 risks exist. We will have the opportunity to talk about them with concrete examples, but I already invite you to look for them... in your personal experience.

In any case, the coach must engage in this "search for the real" or search for fullness (real & full value of people and actions): completeness, entirety, authenticity;

_ that is, search for the real capabilities of the individual, his true potential that one has to discover sometimes and commits to enhance sportively within the team,

_ but also search for the real well-being of one's team, of one's players: searching for their real satisfaction that... (watch out!) can also very well be facilitated by sports progress, by performance improvements.

Because it is true that there is a certain tension between objective progress and personal growth (or subjective realization), but they are very connected, they interact with each other: the improvement of one's performance impacts the subjective feeling of satisfaction, of well-being, happiness, especially when one's own improvement also benefits others; and conversely, many times one's mental serenity positively impacts one's sports performance.

So, when we say that there is tension, it does not mean that the two poles of tension cannot be put in positive interdependence. On the contrary, the coach, in this search for balance, perhaps must really cultivate this possibility. But precisely! It is only a possibility that must be made happen and protected.

As between "freedom" and "obligation", the obligation of the law can inhibit or repress freedom of expression, but it can also allow it. It inhibits freedom when, for example, it tells Role 5 players not to make more than 3 shots at each period of play, or when it says that the Pivot player's basket is not valid because it has exceeded 10 seconds. But the obligation also creates the conditions to express one's freedom, when for example it tells Role 4 players not to defend on Role 3, or when it sanctions a player who commits a foul on another.

There is a tension, but we can and must cultivate a positive dependence between the two dimensions, without leaving too much room for one to the detriment of the other.

Let us finally see the last declination.

C. The third way in which inclusive ethics can be manifested in Baskin. And this corresponds to another commitment (again!), conscious and self-critical: that of having to exercise another form of PROTECTION / CARE (this time from the cultural point of view) and it is about the protection of a certain inclusive BEAUTY of the show that we want to offer to the public.

Here too, the key words have already popped up. The keyword I would like to propose is ESTHETICS.

*I admit, however, that I wanted to find 3 words starting with E (Equity, Empathy, **Aesthetics**: therefore 3 Equilibriums or balances!), this just to give some symmetry, for a purely formal issue, I recognize ;). But perhaps it can also help to remember better: therefore it also has a pedagogical function.*

In any case, I believe that these 3 words make sense. They are not really chosen in a completely random way. I hope it is understood for now.

And to promote this **inclusive Aesthetics** in the sport show, we need a lot of "self-critical" skills, even more perhaps than in the first two areas: the rules of play and the training. Because here, competition is at stake. Let's remember the premise we made: there is a deep conflict between competitive and inclusive logic and therefore a deep ethical tension.

And the right spirit to face it and to embrace its challenge is, in my opinion, the PROTECTION and CARE of a certain inclusive Aesthetics in competition.

But let's understand a little better what tension arises in this case: what tension we need to become aware of, to help us or guide us in a new search for balance. Here, the tension that seems to emerge for the coaches is the one that opposes:

- _ on the one hand, the will to win, the pleasure of being able to reward all the efforts made during training with a victory: therefore, the concern for one's own good, linked to the relationship with one's own team and that's it (whether or not directly defending the identity of one's own sports club). The desire to satisfy one's private instinct: legitimately fighting for one's own good.
- _ on the other hand, leaving the small private sphere of the good precisely to dive into the great public bath of the common good; through what? Through the spectacle that is offered to everyone and that represents the experience that unites everybody in those minutes... in which a multiplicity of actors gather around a field to enjoy this spectacle, to vibrate together in front of the emotions of inclusive sport, to share this piece of life... each in his or her own role (who as a player, who as a coach, who as referee or field officer, who as a spectator, parents or friends...). Everyone is there for a moment of sporting "communion" (if we want to use this word). And everyone has a chance to come out better people after this experience. But it is only a possibility. And it is precisely this possibility that represents the common good to be protected.

So the coach at this juncture, must be aware of what is really at stake at that moment. It is a public event, highly symbolic and ritualized (as we have already said), which brings into play the desire for victory but also the need to protect and care for a sporting spectacle worthy of inclusive culture.

The coach therefore has this fundamental responsibility, which sometimes is a little difficult to understand or to fully internalize ... this responsibility to offer everyone the best possible staging of his work as a coach, to offer his/her players, opponents and spectators HIS attempt to EXCEL: to excel in having best interpreted the cultural work of Baskin during their training in order to arrive at a staging of which he can be truly proud, not only sportively, but also culturally.

VIDEO 3:

SLIDE 7

We have seen that inclusive ethics in Baskin is a matter of balance, or rather a search for balance.

The image of the tightrope walker is in my opinion very suggestive. I use it often. Because it makes you immediately understand that there is ALWAYS the risk of falling. On the one hand if you privilege only one aspect of the challenge. Or on the opposite side, if you privilege the other aspect (to the detriment of the first).

So it is important to transmit to the coach 2 things basically:

1) **The first important thing** to transmit is that the adventure he/she is embarking on is beautiful, exciting and challenging, especially if he/she will strive to stay balanced on the thread of inclusive ethics or in any case on its narrow path; and this adventure never ends, never reaches a stable balance achieved through experience. One cannot rest thinking that he/she has "arrived", that he/she is already an "expert". No! We fall, often, almost always, on one side or the other; we slip, we lose balance all the time. But this is not the problem in itself. This is inevitable. The problem is if we don't realize it. Then we remain unbalanced, or off the path of inclusive ethics, stuck in one of the traps... and perhaps still convinced that we are on the right path. But the way is not straight. It cannot be. It is unpredictable. It must be discovered.

And why is the challenge of keeping us in balance permanent? Why is it so? Precisely because of what we have just said. Because it is being in tension that makes the experience beautiful, exciting and challenging, and that allows us to protect the inclusive ethics; so the path always remains to be discovered, step by step ... And in reality, more than a thread or a path already traced in front of us, it is more a path that we invent at every step, that we trace as we advance; because the adventure is always different from one person to another, from one coach to another, from one trainer to another. As the poet Antonio Machado says: "*The path is made by walking*".

2) **The second thing** we can try to transmit to the coach (but also to the teacher: it is the same thing in school from this point of view) is to make the image of the tightrope walker more concrete by better identifying what are the risks, what are the ravines you can fall into. The risks are many of course, and I tried to identify some of them in the previous slide. But you can also present it in this way, with the identification of two opposite risks, two traps that always threaten the work of the coach, even despite himself. The trap of welfarism/assistentialism on one side and the trap of normalization on the other side.

I will not go into this interpretation in depth now in this speech, because I will have the opportunity to take it back and I hope I will be able solicit your contribution directly to illustrate it in the best way possible thanks to your experience. However, it is an interpretation that seems to me to be very suggestive for a coach because it allows to evoke many concrete examples. And these examples, as we will see later in the course, can be occur at the three levels mentioned before: 1) in the Rules, 2) in training, 3) and in the match.

For now, I will only say that "welfarism" is manifested when we tend to prioritize paying attention to those who appear more fragile, to the detriment of the attention given to others. Sometimes, what might seem only a form of "inclusive zeal/ardor" can hide or turn into pietism. The inclusive spirit sometimes serves as a pretext, without being aware of it (!), to convey a culture of paternalistic care.

While one could say that "normalization" is manifested when we tend to prioritize paying attention to those who most embody the norm of traditional excellence (athletic excellence for example) to the detriment of the attention given to others, i.e. to those who deviate from those normative standards. Sometimes, what might seem only a form of "sports passion" (passion for real sport) can hide or turn into an exclusive selectivity. The sporting spirit sometimes serves as a pretext, without being aware of it (!), to convey a normalizing culture.

SLIDE 8

The important thing of all this talk about the balance to be searched for, in the end, is to have only one thing in mind: the relative **indeterminacy** of things!

Indeed, we only partially control the reasons for our actions. Just imagine their effects!!!

... at least if we are not careful... I do mean.

Baskin is not a magic wand, which in itself generates wonderful effects, on a sporting, educational and cultural level... intrinsically virtuous and humanizing effects. No!

Of course, Baskin - as a work designed for everyone - has a structure (a technical architecture) that favours such effects. Without any doubt.

But, since all the actors who give life to Baskin basically have to deal with precarious balances, in which they can always fall on one side or the other, leaving the narrow path of inclusive ethics, the result is that Baskin phenomenon (collectively produced) is always transformed into local experiences with rather uncertain effects...

SLIDE 9

And do you know the beauty of indeterminacy in human affairs?

It is basically one: it is the freedom to **DECIDE** which world to build! The freedom to choose how to transform indeterminacy into the goals we desire! The freedom to assume our **responsibility**!!!

The indeterminacy fundamentally calls our responsibility. And this is beautiful! Because things don't go by themselves, especially beautiful things!!!! It is we who can make them beautiful, and make them beautiful to everyone, without denying or underestimating the risk that perverse or counterproductive effects may be generated.

Every coach (every teacher, every trainer) must take his/her responsibility with pride and humility...

... with a critical, ethical and practical look: but on this, we will come back another time...

SLIDE 10

The important thing is to communicate to the coach (or the teacher, the educator who takes care of Baskin) that he/she has a beautiful power and that he/she is the main ethical guarantor of the experience offered. It is not the activity itself that ensures this, although Baskin already has the merit of being a work written with great sensitivity and ingenuity to allow the expression of sporting equity.

It is up to the coach to turn this potential into reality!

SLIDE 11

Let's meditate...

I hope that you will help me in the next stages of training to give a concrete interpretation to these theoretical reflections. Because, you will see... this is just the theoretical framework, but in the coming months, we will fill it together with numerous practical examples. So start to think about it, and anchoring the reflection in your personal experience.

SLIDE 12

Happy course to all of you!!!

And may the most inclusive win!