Discussion Guide: *Whiplash*

*Whiplash*, based on director Damien Chazelle’s own experiences, portrays the relationship between an ambitious and talented young musician and his abusive instructor. Often called a "sports movie" about jazz drumming, *Whiplash* includes themes of coach-student relationship, psychological approach to skill improvement, effects of verbal and physical abuse on mental health, and motivation.

Take advantage of the teachable moments presented in *Whiplash* by using these questions to help guide a discussion with your team or children.

1.) Does Fletcher’s yelling motivate Andrew? If so, how? What other approaches could Fletcher have taken to motivate his students?

2.) Fletcher crosses the line again and again as he instructs Andrew to be a better musician - abusing him physically and verbally. Consider these actions with Andrew’s growing psychosis. What other tactics could Fletcher have taken to teach Andrew but maintain an appropriate teacher-student relationship?

3.) In the film, Andrew struggles with keeping tempo. This struggle becomes a road block for him throughout much of the movie. What skill have you struggled with mastering and how have you overcome any mental road blocks?

4.) Fletcher’s coaching style is antithetical to Positive Coaching Alliance’s concept of a Double-Goal Coach® - a leader that strives to win while also pursuing the more important goal of teaching life lessons. List at least 3 reasons why Fletcher’s philosophy differs so much from PCA’s.

5.) At the core of this film is a question of whether it’s more important to be great or be a decent human being. What do you think and why?