The 6 building blocks of quality experience

"Focus on what an athlete can do. It doesn't have to look like how other people do the skill/sport, it must work for that specific athlete."

DARDA SALES,
2-time Canadian Paralympian in Para Swimming and Wheelchair Basketball; Para Swim Coach

Autonomy
Having independence, choice, control

- Ask athletes how to best address their needs or make adaptations
- Allow athletes to choose the skill or technique that they feel is most important to work on
- Help athletes set attainable, individualized goals

Belongingness
Feeling included, accepted, respected, part of the group

- Understand athletes' needs and goals and tailor training to their needs and goals
- Build a solid relationship with the athletes in your program
- Recognize the contributions of all group members

Challenge
Feeling appropriately tested

- Collaborate with athletes or locate resources to make activities appropriately challenging
- Provide options for activities that cater to varying levels of skill or ability
- Implement regular fitness or skills testing, and/or record athlete progress

Engagement
Being in-the-moment, focused, absorbed, fascinated

- Ensure equipment is adapted to meet participants' needs
- Add new activities and games into sessions to maintain athlete interest
- Create playful competition between athletes and volunteers or staff to encourage athletes to try new skills

Mastery
Feeling a sense of achievement, accomplishment, competence

- Get trained and certified within your sport
- Provide athletes with training logs to record personal progress or notes
- Offer opportunities for athletes to learn from their peers

Meaning
Contributin toward obtaining a personal or socially maningful goal; feeling a sense of responsability to others

- Assign roles to individual group members or create roles that participants can choose to fulfill (examples: team captain, equipment manager, social events coordinator)
- Provide opportunities for family members and caregivers to get involved in sport organizations or activities
- Show interest in the athletes' personal lives and demonstrate concern for their well-being