

The Disappointed Look

Joseph Robinson Jr., author of *Seven Leadership Imperatives for a Wild Man*, tells about an important lesson he learned early in life.

Two members of the high school basketball team on which he played had violated team rules. It fell to Robinson, as team captain, to meet with all the players and decide with them on an appropriate punishment to be imposed by the coaches. But one of the violators was an informal leader of the team, and during the meeting, he led the group in a persuasive argument for leniency – even though the infraction called for at least a two-game suspension.

Unable to stand up to the pressure, Robinson gave in and went to the coaches to announce the decision – a slap on the wrist instead of a real penalty.

The disappointment in the coaches' faces was palpable. "I will carry that look to my grave," Robinson writes, "but it was so powerful that I promised myself that no one else would ever again have to give me such a look for failing to stand for what I knew to be just and right."

Sometimes, our toughest lessons are the ones we impose on ourselves.

– Beecher Hunter