



The **BALL**
is the **ENEMY**

DR. MAC POWELL



All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, micro filming, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

The publisher and author are not engaged in rendering psychological services (e.g., counseling or psychotherapy). If legal or professional psychological advice is required, the services of a competent licensed professional should be sought.

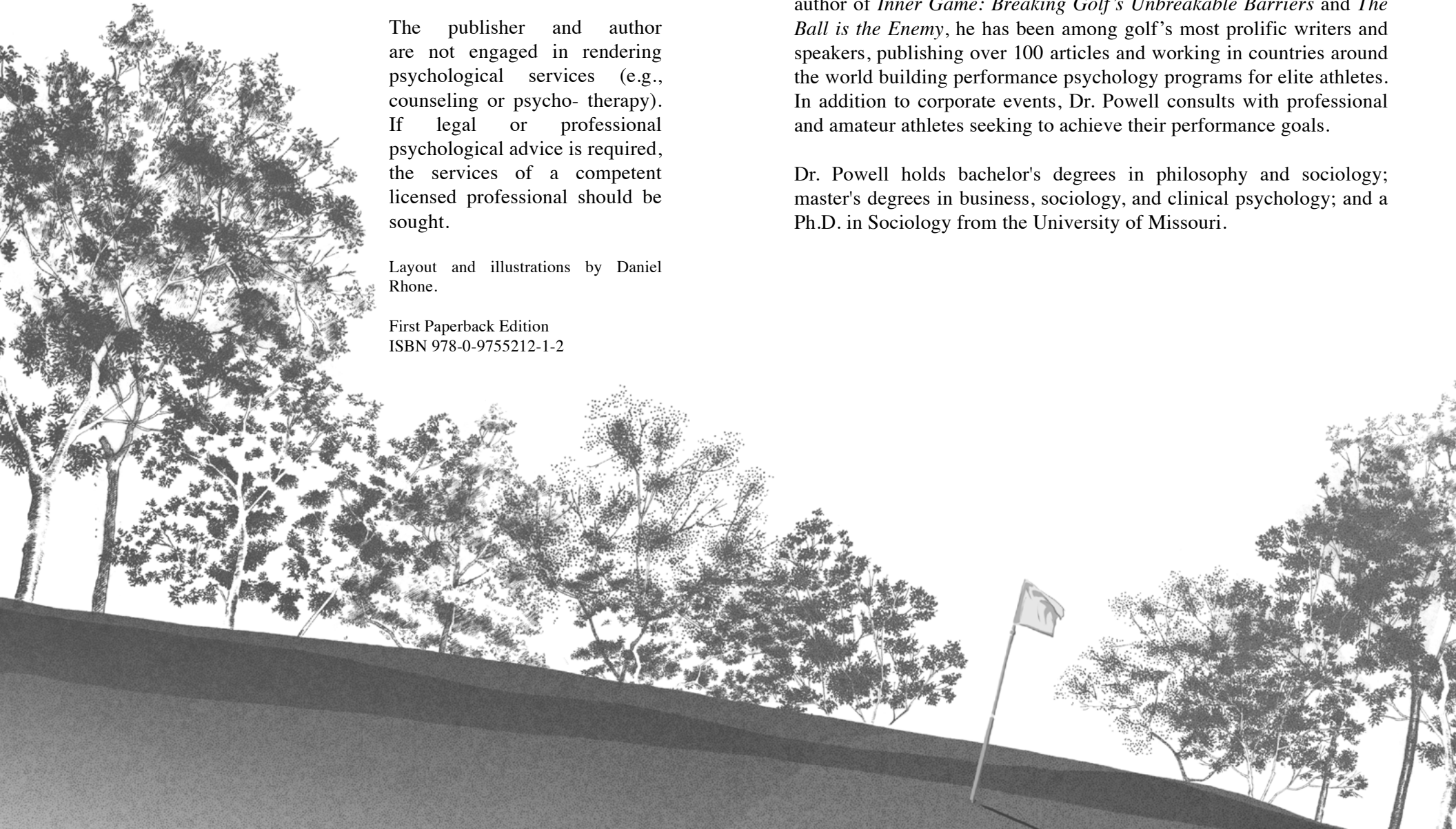
Layout and illustrations by Daniel Rhone.

First Paperback Edition
ISBN 978-0-9755212-1-2

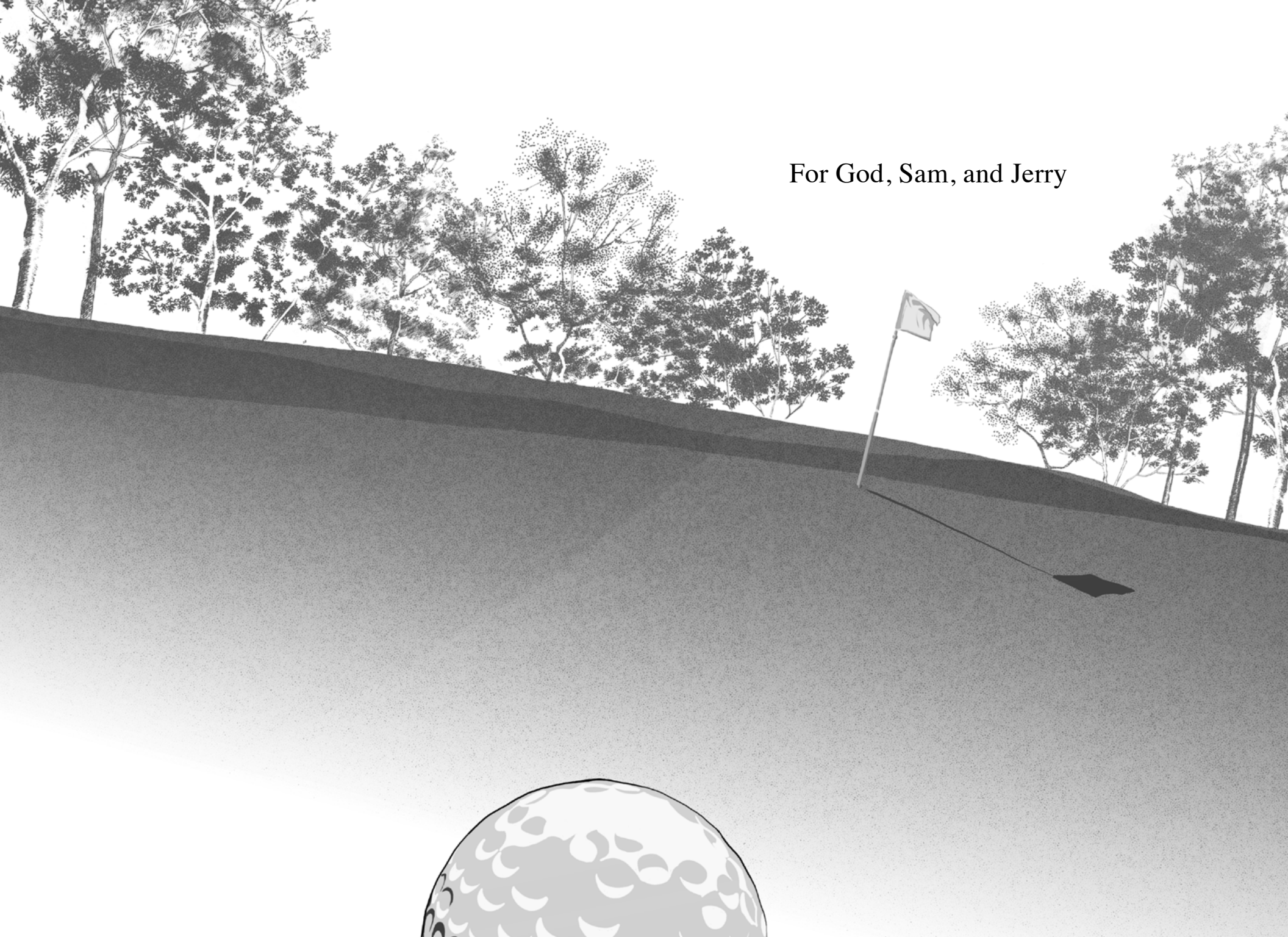
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Mac Powell is a PGA Master Professional and founding dean of the National University Golf Academy. He has served as Director of Golf and/or Head Professional at multiple facilities in Southern California and as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Performance Psychology. The author of *Inner Game: Breaking Golf's Unbreakable Barriers* and *The Ball is the Enemy*, he has been among golf's most prolific writers and speakers, publishing over 100 articles and working in countries around the world building performance psychology programs for elite athletes. In addition to corporate events, Dr. Powell consults with professional and amateur athletes seeking to achieve their performance goals.

Dr. Powell holds bachelor's degrees in philosophy and sociology; master's degrees in business, sociology, and clinical psychology; and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Missouri.



For God, Sam, and Jerry



INDEX

Preface |

Introduction |||

The Types 1

- The Crusader 4
- The Advisor 7
- The Achiever 10
- The Mystic 13
- The Thinker 16
- The Skeptic 19
- The Joker 22
- The Maverick 25
- The Peacemaker 28
- Integrating of The Types 32

Building a Better Game 35

- Skills Evaluation 36
- Ball Striking 37
- Pitching and Chipping 40
- Bunker Play 41
- Putting 42
- The Mental Edge 43
- Conclusion 44
- Creating Your Individual Training Manual 45
- Prioritizing Your Efforts 54
- Conclusion 54
- You Don't Have To Have Any New Ideas 56
- Uncompleted Circles of Action 59
- The 10 Percent Rule 60
- Zone of Optimal Functioning 62
- What No Golf Professional In the World Wants You to Know 64
- 9 Principle Ball Flights 66
- Scrimmage 68
- Force In The Swing 69
- Force In The Relationships 71
- Attention 74

- Mistakes and Opportunities 76
- The U Curve 79
- Moving in the Right Direction 80
- Learning On The Course 81
- Strategy 82
- Fear and Denial 85
- Control 87
- Choosing a Teacher 89
- The Monkey Mind 91
- Visualization 93
- See It, Feel It, and Reward Yourself to Be It 95
- For Every Season 97
- Observational Learning 99
- A Growing Storm 100
- Building Your Network 101
- Positive Reinforcement 102
- Mindfulness 103
- In The Zone 106
- Optimistic vs. Realistic 107
- Stay in the Process 109
- Easy Does It 111
- The 3 Ts 113
- The Eyes of a Champion 115
- Never Complain 116
- Get a Sponsor 117
- Three Balls Or Less 119
- Conclusion 121

Drills 122

- Putting 123
- Short Game 126
- The Obstacle Course Full Shot 131
- Technique Drills 133

Quotes 137

Appendices 155

- Vision Worksheet 156
- Skills Evaluation 158
- 30 Day Action Plan 160
- Notes 164

PREFACE

Ben Hogan was by many accounts the greatest ball striker in the history of the game. Legend has it he was so accurate he would have his caddy stand in place and have the caddy catch the balls out of the air without moving. While that anecdote's original source is lost, it is familiar to most golfers. Having read and studied Ben Hogan's career and writings, I can understand how the story grew in popularity. When I was 30, I heard what I believe is the longer truer version of that story.

Sam Reynolds grew up poor in Witchita Falls, Kansas during the Great Depression. He was a gifted athlete, not terribly smart, but willful and tenacious to a fault. He learned golf the way most poor children learned, by caddying. When he was 14, he hitchhiked across the country to Texas, where Ben Hogan lived and practiced. He went to the caddy master and asked to caddy for Mr. Hogan. The caddy master laughed and said, "Son, everyone wants to caddy for Mr. Hogan, and I've got a stable full of regular caddies that I'd use way before you. Get lost." Sam did what any willful child would do; he waited in the hedges of the parking lot, ambushed Hogan, and told him that he had hitchhiked across country to caddy for the man and would be grateful for the chance. Hogan was not a gregarious or even friendly man, but he gave Sam the chance, much to the consternation of the caddy master.

Sam's first assignment was to retrieve the balls that Hogan would use during practice (balls were very expensive and players carried their own small canvas shag bag). Hogan told Sam to go stand at a certain yardage and pick up the balls when they stopped. Sam ran down the range and Hogan began to hit. Hogan was an accurate ball striker and Sam was an excellent athlete looking to show off. Hogan hit a ball in the air and Sam plucked it out of the air with the canvas bag. This happened two more times before Hogan stormed down the range, pigeon toed and foul mouthed, cursing Sam. "I told you to let the balls

land and stop!" Hogan was working on his carry and total distances, ever the precise ball striker. Sam was now a red bottomed young man, but they would go on to become good friends. In fact, when Hogan established the Ben Hogan Company, many people know that Claude Harmon was one of a handful of men to get the first sponsorships; Sam Reynolds was as well.

I learned golf from Sam, though I didn't know at the time he was one of the best teachers in the world. He coached golfers on every tour, including his most well-known, Payne Stewart (who I was fortunate enough to learn from in the first golf clinic I ever attended). Sam Reynolds was never well-known, but he was an early member of the PGA Tour, despite holding down a club professional job. He never won on the Tour, but finished second many times and played in The Master's, probably his favorite venue. He was Vice President of the PGA for a time and retired from a long tenure at a private club to bowl, spend time with his wife, and selectively teach some of the best golfers in the country.

Sam has many students, and most have played better golf than I ever will, but I would like to thank him for all the knowledge and wisdom that he has given to me over the years. The opportunity to pass along his ideas has been tremendously rewarding. Among the core beliefs that stand out to me as a teacher are: the game is played with a swinging (rather than hitting) action; the eyes control the mind, which controls the body; and the greatest barrier to improvements with students isn't technical ability, but the limitations of the mind and memory.



INTRODUCTION

"The Ball is The Enemy," is one of the first erroneous assumptions you must unlearn to be a great player. The ball is an extension of your mind, body, swing, and intentions. Any general will tell you that to identify an enemy and plot against it gives substance to a threat. An enemy requires attention, energy, and strategy. An enemy is not easily tamed and nothing that we actively work against is easily contained. The ball is an extension of what you are and do on the golf course, but it is separate from you and doesn't represent your capabilities. As soon as you begin to hit at the ball, apply force to the ball, and struggle to control the ball the ball gains control over you. Your mind focuses only on the ball. The ball's movements trigger your emotions, your feelings of anxiety and contentment, and you begin to forget that golf begins with the mind, a quiet empty mind. The ball is the enemy is a mindset of control, not acceptance. Much like a husband, wife, or lover, the more you attempt to control an object, the more disconnected you become from your own peace of mind.

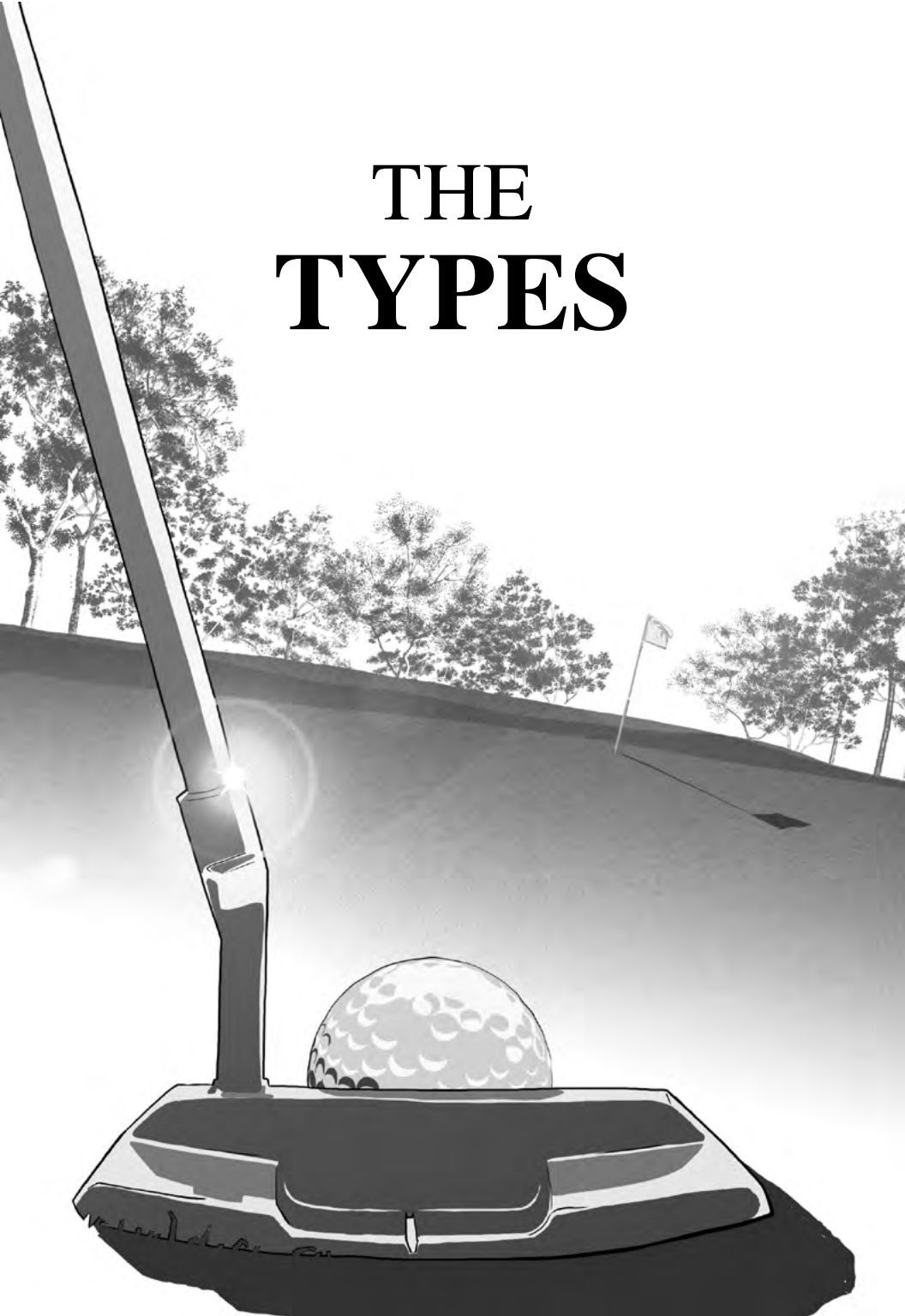
To learn golf, you must begin with an empty mind free of preconception or expectation. What you know and have experienced merely get in the way of the unfiltered experience of the present. Golf can be taught very simply, and can be played well when a novice is free from the hundreds of thoughts that cloud the more experienced player's mind. This is why children can learn the game so easily, swing so freely, and perform without fear. A "Beginner's Mind" is almost impossible for anyone with access to magazines, popular media, and a television network devoted to the promotion of the game. Other people's views of the game, the swing, and the teaching of it cloud the simple swinging action of the club through the ball. It is the first of many barriers to learning the game that reside exclusively in the mind. Some of the barriers that prevent peak performance in golf or any endeavor are expectations, lack of vision, limits to our ability to know or experience, and the frailties of our own character and personality. While a good instructor and a superior

set of clubs can move the technical aspects of the swing forward, there is no way to work around a strong mental game. The mind is the last battlefield in sport, business, and relationships. When every obstacle is overcome, there is only you and your experience and a decision about where to go from there. Motivation, vision, dreams, and determination reside in the mind, and yet the mind is often the last asset or vulnerability considered on a campaign.

I hope that you will learn to better hone the capabilities of your mind. By releasing what you think you know and building a fresh foundation, I believe it is possible to achieve a greater level of success, acceptance, and peak performance.



THE TYPES



The mental game begins with inward focused attention. What is behind your eyes is more important than what is in front of them, and becoming aware of the mind's subtle trickery is an evolving battle. The more powerful the mind, the more subtle its ability to maneuver around technique and common sense practice.

In this book I will discuss how our unique strengths, weaknesses, barriers, and roles are familiar. Our patterns have meaning, value, and limitations and this book will spend time discussing the patterns in how we form relationships with ourselves and with others. As golf is often a game played in the company of others, it can teach us about ourselves and our tendencies toward how we treat and react to the people around us. As man is a social animal, so is he prone to patterns, and these patterns, when identified and mastered, can have profound value. For instance, some of us repeatedly compliment other people, receive positive feedback from those compliments, and unendingly repeat that cycle. From this pattern we might assign the belief that we are considerate and thoughtful, and yet this is not all of who we are. The truth is that we are both considerate and inconsiderate, empathetic and selfish. Unbeknownst to you, your personality has established the limits of who you are and how far you'll go in life: whom you'll marry, how high and how fast you'll climb the corporate ladder, and whether you'll ultimately be satisfied or disappointed with your life. This highlights an underlying assumption of my work: you will go only as far in golf as you go in your life.

The link between worldly success, golfing ability, and spiritual fulfillment is found in how we use, develop, and learn from our personalities.

In this book, I have identified nine distinct personalities, or Types. The model is based upon the Enneagram, an ancient system for understanding personalities rooted in Jungian Psychology. The basics are quite simple. There are nine Types, all with strengths and weaknesses that manifest in consistent and habitual patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions.

The Types are unique expressions of who we are. Each of us has a dominant Type, a particular lens that we see the world through, and each of us has traits and tendencies that cause us to identify with other "Types" of people in very specific and predictable ways. Early in our lives, we adopt a particular Type, almost always as a reaction to what was happening in our families. Over the course of our lives, we incorporate the positive traits of other Types, but remain, almost without exception, an expression of the dominant Type developed in our childhood.

While you may see yourself in many of the Types, my hope is that you identify one that best exemplifies your personality and idiosyncrasies as a golfer and person. It will be helpful for you to remind yourself, your friends, and your playing partners of your tendencies, to tell them who you are so that they can assist you with monitoring your growth. It is my hope that you can begin to see movement, and that you can begin to alter your perception of yourself and others. Each Type can thrive in any setting, and mastering how you react to situations and people in your life will assist you both on and off the course. The game has much to teach, and students are rewarded as much for attitude and approach as their actual performance.

The following section describes the Types, offers Type-specific exercises designed to take advantage of the personality-performance relationship, and provides a list of historical examples of famous men and women who illustrate the Type.





THE CRUSADER

Crusaders are responsible, serious, and self-disciplined. At their best, they are tolerant and accepting, fair and principled, yet their strong opinions are sometimes accompanied by impatience and sarcasm, and, not surprisingly, Crusaders are no strangers to conflict. Crusaders are often model children who grow into hard working, righteous, and fiercely independent adults. Crusaders use their minds more than their hearts, and often intellectualize emotional problems and regularly repeat unsuccessful attempts to solve feeling problems with thinking solutions.

Crusaders can feel agitated over the little things in life and spend an extraordinary amount of energy investing in what is scrupulous or correct. This can lead to disappointment or resentment toward others who seem to sail easily through life. The major character flaw of the Crusader is anger or rage, reacting to the injustices or inefficiencies around him with outward demonstrations of self-righteousness.

On the golf course, the Crusader is conscientious, fair, serious, and committed to improving his game. As a student of the game, the Crusader may be its most rigorous practitioner, constantly seeking innovative

ways to improve upon technique and tirelessly devoted to established practice routines. Crusaders are excellent critics, but their devotion to perfectionism and reluctance to accept the difficult transformations in demeanor and mental approach can inhibit long-term performance. From a technical standpoint, Crusaders are likely to lose focus of rhythm, tempo, and fluidity, and attempt to solve problems on the course with rigidly held swing thoughts, regardless of the outcome.

Crusaders become self-actualizing by accepting the spontaneity of life. As they develop, Crusaders gradually learn to relax their defenses and are able to accept and learn from the perspectives of others. Crusaders become more curious, optimistic, and interested about the lives of others. A natural tendency of the type is to become tense and nervous about perceived complacency when they learn to let go. However, in reality, it is the lack of inner awareness that leads to capriciousness. As Crusaders learn to be more introspective and accepting of their own idiosyncrasies, true expression of the self is possible. The natural qualities of healthy Crusaders are joy, enthusiasm, curiosity, and open-mindedness.

“The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.”

– Carl Rogers

In order to develop into great players, Crusaders often attempt to think their way out of bad habits or decisions; however, the key to improved performance is recognition of a Crusader’s passions and emotions and a commitment to the enjoyment of the processes of improvement rather than the destination of perfection.

In the book, *Golf in the Kingdom*, the mystical figure Shivas Irons holes out from the tee on a long Par 3 over a crevasse in the pitch of night. Before he swings, he unleashes a terrible cry, a howl that frightens the main character, Michael Murphy. In order to perform at their highest, Crusaders must release their anger, must decide in advance to release their tension, and do so by pouring their selves and their souls into the shot. In spiritual terms, the Crusader must practice Kenosis, or the

emptying of the soul in order to fulfill his possibilities. The following are some exercises designed to assist Crusaders in pouring themselves into the game.

Give in to your passion. Crusaders often make the mistake of displacing their passion into petty jealousies or regrets. More than any other type, the Crusader must commit to a Vision Statement that draws from his deep conviction and love for the game. Crusaders are the easiest to get knocked off track when things go wrong on the course, so be constantly familiar with the following phrase: “Is this emotion taking me closer or farther away from my goal?” With this question always on the front of the mind, a Crusader’s passion can easily be honed into improved performance.

As an aid to his mental game, Ben Hogan would hold onto his club after a shot and release it only after he reached the next shot in order to keep himself mentally in the game. Try the drill with a golf club, or make a habit using physical objects, such as touching a bag tag before drawing a club and starting your preshot routine. Basketball players will sometimes touch their face or arms before a free throw to start a chain reaction of positive mental practices. Use one of these techniques to center yourself before and between shots.

Famous Crusaders: Ben Hogan, Thomas Jefferson, Pope John Paul II, and C.S. Lewis.



THE ADVISOR

Caring, empathetic, and generous, the Advisor is the most gracious, forgiving, and giving of the Types. At his best, he is encouraging, humble, and supportive, yet the Advisor’s need to feel wanted and appreciated for who he is can be overpowering, and may lead to people-pleasing and insincere praise. The Advisor is often the power behind the throne but may find himself asking questions about his true identity later in life. The Advisor’s life revolves around people and relationships, and perhaps because Advisors are the most giving and sensitive of the Types, they are most susceptible to approval seeking.

The Advisor is the least likely to engage in fierce competition, yet his own game can become as impressive as any of the Types. Optimal performance typically occurs when playing or practicing alone, as introspection and grace are more easily achieved when not concerned with the presence of others. The Advisor is the least likely of the Types to master the game under competitive circumstances, and Advisors who become great players must first reconcile their own discomfort with the selfish practices required to free the time and energy necessary to develop as a player.

Advisors learn to self-actualize by accepting their feelings. This does not mean that they must necessarily act on their feelings. For instance, instead of criticizing or becoming angry with people who are selfish or insensitive, they may recognize the upset and express it in more healthy ways. Self-expression can be an extremely helpful tool for Advisors and perhaps assist in becoming appropriately selfish. If the Advisor's focus upon others can be set aside, or, better yet, redirected toward self-nurturing and support, the Advisor may be the most likely to achieve mastery in a short period of time, as he is already capable of many of the critical elements of mastery: empathy, acceptance, and a deep passion for the game.

“Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

– Proverbs

The best teachers can make the best or worst students. Advisors regularly come to the course with a game plan and razor-like ability to decide what to do under pressure. They appear to be excellent surveyors of the territory, and yet this is the key to the Advisor's failure. Advisors must relinquish their “knowing” in order to excel. They must learn to open their hearts and minds to new possibilities, even miracles. Instead of being trapped into a particular way of thinking that has already demonstrated a historical track record, Advisors must learn to “think outside the box,” “be spontaneous,” and “go with the flow.” It is ultimately a willingness to surrender and be humble that will lead to an Advisor's greatest triumphs.

Play alone. Advisors' greatest gains can be made when left to solitary exploration. When an Advisor is left alone on the course, he may feel uncomfortable or find his mind wandering. Keep track of the thoughts and remind yourself why you play the game.

Get selfish. Of all the Types, Advisors are the last to spend money on nice clubs, clothes, or weekend rounds. They are also the least likely to give up the expectations of those around them. If you're not

already playing regularly because of the obligations you've made, it's time to reconsider your priorities. Self-care includes taking the time to explore your passions. Practically, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Taking care of yourself now will support your efforts and others down the line.

Make a list of simple pleasures, particularly those having to do with golf. Force yourself to indulge yourself once a day. Devote at least 10% of your energy to improve. If you're already spending 10%, spend 20%. Ultimately, it is the Advisor's willingness to give into their selfish love of the game that leads to enhanced performance.

Famous Advisors: Patty Berg, Mother Teresa, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ann Landers, and Mr. Rogers.





THE ACHIEVER

For Achievers, failure is not an option. Almost without exception, Achievers will quickly master the rudimentary elements of the game, giving them a leg up on the rest of the Types. Achievers are competent, goal-oriented, ambitious, organized, and performance driven. At their best Achievers are well-adjusted, both self-accepting and interested in the affairs of others. Achievers want the right job, best car, most impressive home, and will spend a great deal of time choosing and creating the foundation for an impeccable family. The Achiever is a go-getter and a model citizen, yet may ignore the emotional nuances of life and relationships.

The weakness of the Achiever is the natural byproduct of quickly found success. Because golf is a game that will ultimately require acceptance and humility, the Achiever may try to bypass these virtues in favor of perfectionism or an irrational dedication to technical mastery. For the Achiever, the limits of his abilities are painful reminders of his humanity and the edges are either quickly conquered or expertly avoided. Achievers often have a love-hate relationship with the game and find themselves going through phases of intense devotion and avoidance of the game.

As Achievers begin to work through their personal limitations, they will find that communication is more authentic, sincere, and direct. Caring and genuine appreciation can replace the need to manage image and self-importance, and this is accomplished by pursuits that transcend personal interest. The joy of selfless sharing to a cause greater than oneself is the path toward integration. Achievers typically experience themselves as being alone on their quest and in life. As they begin to give more freely of themselves without personal gain, they are better able to accept the support available to them. They learn to forgo fears of inadequacy and embrace the assistance of others. They learn how to truly feel for the first time. It is truly a transition from doing to being.

“I want to be what I’ve always wanted to be: dominant.”

– Tiger Woods

The Achiever is the quickest to succeed, and yet the most likely to have hollow joy and unfulfilling glory. The Achiever must grapple with his own sadness and indecisiveness, his own wonder over his course in life. He must face whatever is happening on the course as an expression of the limitations of his life, take a deep breath, and accept the limitations as part of the universal order. Limitations can be allies and direction markers telling us to go another way, but Achievers often barrel through the warning signs, assuring themselves and others that rules and records were meant to be broken. The following are exercises to maximize Achievers’ strengths and to assist with minimizing their weaknesses.

List your fears. Spend at least an hour writing down the things you fear and avoid. Be as specific and graphic as possible. When you have exhausted your fears, spend a moment reflecting on the amount of energy you spend worrying about or trying to prevent these outcomes.

Imagine yourself without fear. Spend at least fifteen minutes writing down what you'd do without your fears. Again, be as graphic and detailed as possible. Give in to the possibility that dreams might come true.

Famous Achievers: Jack Nicklaus, Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, and Tiger Woods.



4

THE MYSTIC

The Mystic is the most inwardly focused of the Types. Mystics are often quiet, elegant, imaginative, and capable of formidable and passionate expression. For this reason, they are often seen as feeling types and direct these feelings toward a variety of endeavors, some creative others self-destructive. Mystics believe that the authentic life is the only one worth living, and can find peace and meaning in even the most difficult of human conditions. Mystics pursue the impossible dream out of a deep need for understanding and feeling, and the well from which they draw is filled with passion for the unfulfilled promise of wholeness and what is missing in life.

The Mystic is the streakiest Type, without question. It is hard to say what drives Mystics to greater heights, shame or self-pretension. Mystics can be dangerous competitors, and when encouraged and challenged by the right coach, I suspect that the Mystic has the potential to be the greatest golfer of the Types.

Mystics are already intrinsically skeptical and self-critical. However, the lacking element is discipline. The dominant trait needed is discrimination.

Traditionally, Mystics must learn to accept the reality around them. Instead of fighting against the tide to mold the outer world to their inner vision, healthy Mystics learn to accept the physical world around them, including mistakes and protections. The key to their success is becoming grounded in the steadiness of reality and the physical world. In relationships, Mystics tend to draw friends and partners that can rescue them from their constant pursuit of emotional turmoil. For this reason, Mystics must balance intense passion with devout surrender and mindfulness.

“Envy is the daughter of pride, the author of murder and revenge, the beginner of secret sedition and the perpetual tormentor of virtue. Envy is the filthy slime of the soul; a venom, a poison, or quicksilver which consumeth the flesh and drieth up the marrow of the bones.”

– Socrates

Nothing is missing from your life. Nothing is missing from your game. Spending time to refine the gifts that you have will serve you best. Focusing on the positives and committing yourself to a plan of action are the sure ways to enhanced performance. Retooling swings, changing clubs, and endless tinkering are common Mystic mistakes. Indecisiveness and self-doubt often follow a Mystic’s envy. Try the following drills to maximize the Mystic’s better qualities:

Refuse to be discouraged. Of all the Types, Mystics are the most likely to fall into despair over their performance or lack of improvement. Mystics need to be constantly reassured that they are headed in the right direction, but also need their own assistance in remaining positive. Make a weekly list of the areas in which you’ve improved. Commit ahead of time that if you’re not improved in any area, you’ll only dwell on where you can improve most quickly, and commit to a practice plan that can get you back on track.

Develop a solid practice plan. In the back of the book you’ll find

a sample practice plan, outlining how some players approach improving their performance. Mystics **MUST** develop and use a thorough practice plan. If possible, give the plan to a colleague or playing partner who can gently support you by reminding you to stick to the routine you’ve established. Devote yourself to a practice plan for at least three months and don’t allow yourself to change mid-term. Consistent devotion to basic principles is the Mystic’s key for improved performance.

Famous Mystics: Bobby Jones, J.D. Salinger, Peter Tchaikovsky, and Bob Dylan.





5

THE THINKER

Inquisitive, profound, perceptive, and unsentimental, the Thinker, like the Mystic, is prone to complexity and self-reliance, yet the Thinker is the more playful of the two types. Thinkers are skilled at reason and rationalization and regularly find themselves racked with anxiety and self-doubt both on and off the course. They are the most visionary of the Types, pioneers in approaches to the game.

Thinkers can be private and shy, and may turn silent around strangers. Even around friends, Thinkers often watch what they say and may regularly take the stance of neutral observer. When the Thinker does speak, he is precise and exact. Others will listen. Thinkers' feelings are rarely displayed, and though they have as many as any of the Types, they are often too delicate, precious, and private to be displayed for others. Thinkers are meticulous planners who thrive in situations with predictability. They are prone to specialization in obscure hobbies or careers that help to explain the complexities of existence and uncertainty.

The integration of the Thinker involves the acceptance of the body and the limitations of the mind. Thinkers often feel anxiety as feelings arise, and

the natural tendency is intellectualize and rationalize to meet, minimize, and escape feelings. However, as the Thinker begins to be comfortable in their own bodies, to feel its strengths, weaknesses, and protections, they can truly find awareness. As Thinkers learn to accept their physical limitations, they're more likely to discover their strengths, competence, and lost sense of energy and vitality missing in intellectualization.

The Thinker is often devoted to the ideas of the game rather than to the experience or performance of it. His inward and sometimes detached approach can lead him to preoccupation with impractical or extreme beliefs or desires. Yet, here is the strength of the Thinker. His fuel and commitment to ideas can be long-reaching, and if allowed to be steadily focused, there is no height he cannot reach.

“There is no fire like passion, there is no shark like hatred,
there is no snare like folly, there is no torrent like greed.”

– Buddha

Because golf is a mental game, Thinkers are predisposed to performing well. Thinkers often, however, perform better in private where they can hone their skills with deliberateness. They can be secretive about their game, and sneaky about their progress and improvement. The key to the Thinker's mastery of the game is that he must fight. Thinkers must develop an ability to get in an opponent's face, to put their foot on a competitor's throat when he's down. Passion needs to be put into the quest for competitive and cooperative excellence.

Partner Up. Thinkers require a compatriot they can play with and compete against. When Thinkers play by themselves or with other Thinkers, the game is often enlightening, but rarely intense and passionate. Ideally, a Thinker would pair up with a Joker, someone boisterous and obnoxious, someone that pushes all of a Thinker's buttons. Thinkers must overcome their distaste for getting their hands dirty, and begin to engage and enjoy the prospect of taking risks, winning ugly, and the bitterness of close defeats.

Win Ugly and Love It. Thinkers often have a slow building negative emotional reaction to their shots not being perfect. Unlike Achievers, Thinkers won't typically overreact or throw tantrums, but they can slowly go away in a round or tournament, barely being aware of themselves or surroundings by the 18th Hole. Winning Ugly is the solution. Thinkers have to develop a sneakiness about bad shots, and this is another time where an excellent short game can destroy an opponent or save a round. Thinkers must have great escape shots and develop an affinity for getting the ball in the hole, rather than a flawlessly executed game plan.

The Mystic Wing.

One of the Thinker's wings (or neighbor) on the Enneagram is The Mystic. Thinkers can tend toward this Type, explaining their subtle talents of creativity and sensitivity. Use these tendencies around the greens. With the ability to be magical from bunkers, the fringe, and inside 100 yards, the Thinker can be a dominant player.

Famous Thinkers: Byron Nelson, Albert Einstein, Glenn Gould, Vincent Van Gogh, and Sigmund Freud.



THE SKEPTIC

The Skeptic is the most complicated of the Types, and Skeptics have the most difficult time finding peace in the game. Skeptics are fascinated by the “worst case scenario,” which creates havoc in a golf swing. They are characterized by their hard work, devotion, and cautious approach to any endeavor. Skeptics are courageous, faithful, funny, and grounded; yet, of all the Types, the quickest to worry and find reasons for suspiciousness and blame. Thinking is the dominant function of the Skeptic, which often leads to anxiety and doubt. The Skeptic has the potential to learn the most from the game of golf, particularly its fickleness and seeming unfairness. Skeptics find relationships difficult and are always vigilant and watchful, even of their mates. They thrive in environments with clearly drawn structure and hierarchy, but may escape later in their careers to self-employment in order to avoid the scrutiny of supervisors. Skeptics can often be afraid to act on their own behalf and may replace doing with endless planning. They are suspicious of the motives of others and will often identify with underdog causes.

The Skeptic's natural tendency toward inaction is rooted in the lack of awareness of the here and now. Even during intense athletic activity, the Skeptic is often not completely present and centered in the body.

Learning to feel anxiety, frustration, and doubt without reacting to it is the key to the Skeptic's success. Skeptics seek safety, but in order to find mastery of the game, they must accept golf's uncertainty and cruelty as tests for continued dedication to their dreams and core beliefs. Skeptics are streaky players and no amount of talent or knowledge guarantees success. Skeptics must surrender to the uncertainty of the game while holding faith in the process of practice and performance. As their worry fades, so do their performance barriers.

“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified, terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

– Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The Skeptic's obedience to safe, responsible practice and play is a recipe for disaster. Obeying the rules will not lead to long or short-term success, nor will manic overdoing or rushing. As players and people, Skeptics must learn to stretch their comfort zones, one day at a time. Rome was not built in a day, and despite the Skeptic's intense wishes, progress will come slowly, perhaps paradoxically, by greater and greater discomforts. Try the following to develop an ability to stretch gradually, to trade caution for systematic aggressiveness:

Develop a more aggressive swing. Practice hitting your driver to different distances. Begin by hitting it only 50 yards. Hit the next shot 60. Hit the third shot 70 yards, and continue until you are pushing past whatever your longest drive is. If you find yourself overswinging, work your way back toward 50 yards until you have found the proper rhythm and tempo. But immediately reverse and work toward your maximum drive. Don't take your most aggressive swing to the course, but plan on hitting it 90% all day long.

Putt to the back of the hole. Skeptics overread putts and almost always leave them on the short side of the hole. Take the break out of the putts and begin to hit them at the back of the hole. See the ball

traveling over the front edge with enough roll to get it past the hole. If in doubt about the line of a putt, hit it hard and at the middle. Trust that you'll make the comebacker.

Trust a coach. Find a coach with whom you can relate, and commit to seeing that person for at least a year. This is a challenge for most Skeptics, but consistency is important. Accept the challenges a coach offers and accept responsibility if things go awry. For this reason, you'll need to do some research into the most suitable instructors. Make your decision about your coach by researching thoroughly. You'll be glad you did.

Famous Skeptics: Ben Crenshaw, Robert F. Kennedy, Bruce Springsteen, Tom Hanks, and Johnny Carson.





THE JOKER

Curious, eager, outgoing, adventurous, and talkative, Jokers are the gluttons of the game, and their appreciation of the finer things makes them wonderful and entertaining playing partners. Jokers are the most gregarious of the Types, and their games often come from the easygoing approach they take with every challenge in their lives.

Jokers are the men who never grow up, who take pride in their individuality, and are often identified by their quick, if not always appropriate, wit. Jokers want to experience everything and are skilled at fitting together ideas and people from differing backgrounds and orientations. To all of this, they are charmers and flatterers of the worst sort.

Life is not always fun, and Jokers must learn how to slow and quiet activity of the mind by cultivating a more quiet and focused internal state of being. Detachments and stillness of the mind are terrifying to the Joker, but learning to breathe deeply and appreciate the qualities of the quiet mind lead to the Joker's self-actualization.

Jokers tend toward risk taking and consistent performance is never as important as major accomplishments, if few and far between. Jokers are the best playing partners for a round on the weekend but don't mix well in competition with grinders and more introspective types. As students of the game, they can be fickle and spoiled with teachers who love their exuberance. To grow, they need discipline, structure, and a solid game plan that gives them the opportunity to take risks at appropriate times.

“Gluttony is not a secret vice.”

– Orson Welles

The Joker's lust for the game not only can be contagious, but also compulsive. Jokers walk the fine line between aggressiveness and destruction and can fall short of their goals not because of lack of talent or practice but out of impulsivity and impatience. The spontaneity of the Joker is the fuel for a great player, but acceptance and patience are the virtues that this Type must master in order to excel.

Make Decisions Ahead of Time. Course management begins before you get to the course. Jokers must develop a solid game plan, and practice executing the shots in the mind prior to stepping onto the first tee. More than any other Type, Jokers will want to stray from the game plan. Be consistent. Make decisions ahead of time, not under pressure.

Be a Neutral Observer. As often as possible, see yourself as someone you don't know might see you. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and think about what kind of decisions he might suggest to you. Making decisions from a calm but empathetic position will lead to better choices.

When in Doubt, Choose the Safest Path. If you come to a decision you haven't accounted for, play safe. Keep the ball in the fairway, play to the middle of greens. You can be aggressive inside 100 yards, but the rest of the time, always choose the safe path.

Famous Jokers: John Daly, Payne Stewart, Walter Hagan, John Belushi, and Mel Brooks.



THE MAVERICK

Strong, resourceful, and independent, the Maverick is pragmatic and action-oriented. Mavericks can be counted upon to reveal the truth, no matter how difficult. Because of this, they often step on toes, but make no mistake, they are loyal, inspiring, and gentle friends. They may fit the bad-boy or bad-girl archetype but are just as likely to be the loudest voice for a just cause.

The Maverick is a bold golfer and plays his own game. Mavericks are not distracted easily and are accurate judges of their own ability and trajectory. The limitations of the Maverick are his bluntness, and sometimes domineering adherence to his truth, which some may see as cynicism or defiance. Mavericks are excellent competitors and will tend to win close matches because of their vigilance and action-oriented approach to the game. The opportunity and challenge for the Maverick is to overcome his own perceptual framework, to see things from a different perspective, and to gain new methods and skill for his development as a player.

Learning to accept uncertainty without losing his emotional sensitivity is an important task for the Maverick. Perhaps the best thing a Maverick

can do is to have children, as the compassion and trials of parenting can open their hearts to the imperfections of the world. By loving and accepting others, Mavericks can experience their own vulnerability and accept and nurture themselves.

“Unless you change your life and become like a child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

– Jesus

In some ways, Mavericks are the best students, because once they are convinced of an idea, they will work passionately to implement it; however, they can be stubborn and willful students if matched with the wrong coach or professional.

“...power can mean one of two things, domination or potency. Far from being identical, these two qualities are mutually exclusive. Impotence, using the term not only with regard to the sexual sphere but to all spheres of human potentialities, results in the sadistic striving for domination; to the extent to which an individual is potent, that is, able to realize his potentialities on the basis of freedom and integrity of his self, he does not need to dominate and is lacking the lust for power. Power, in the sense of domination, is the perversion of potency, just as sexual sadism is the perversion of sexual love.”

– Erich Fromm

Mavericks possess an intense passion that can inspire others to great feats. In order for the Maverick to soar, he must develop an unconscious ability to stay in the moment, avoid unnecessary highs and lows, and control the sometimes explosiveness of his passion.

Like Jokers, Mavericks excel under pressure, love the hardest of shots, and embrace the most difficult of challenges. However, these tendencies predispose them to streaky play and foolish decisions. Mavericks must

learn to love the expression of the plans that they have developed and acquire an appreciation for the routines of practice and difficulty of maintaining focus and precision over a four-hour round. Finally, the Maverick must hold his cards close to the vest. He must trade the desire to be out in front for quiet strength and gentle self-forgiveness and praise. The following exercises are designed to maximize a Maverick's performance.

Take 20 steps. Early in his career, Tiger Woods was notorious for slamming clubs into the ground during fits of rage that disrupted the flow of his round. He carried missed shots down the fairway, allowing the negativity to multiply. To combat this pattern, he allowed himself 20 steps to be as upset as he wanted, but by the 20th step, he committed to be completely focused on the next. You might say that every step was lightening the pressure until he was mentally light as a feather before he stepped to the ball and began the preshot routine for the next shot. Studies on professional and Olympic athletes tell us that tantrumming is more likely to lead to success than total suppression of emotions, but that the optimal strategy is to cycle through the highs and the lows quickly. Don't allow the peaks to get too high, or the valleys grow too low. Be happy and sad, angry and elated, but do it in 20 steps.

Famous Mavericks: Seve Ballesteros, Muhammed Ali, Frank Sinatra, Marlon Brando, and John Wayne.





THE PEACEMAKER

On the surface, the Peacemaker is the steady, easygoing player always gracious with a smile and intensely passionate about the game and relationships. Under the surface, they can straddle being optimistic, complacent, and disengaged. At their best, Peacemakers are dynamic, self-aware individuals who can be the glue to a relationship, group, or corporation. Peacemakers may be slow to act but find progress through steady movement toward a given destination. At their core, Peacemakers fear that if they become angry or upset, people will not love or respect them. This drives a need for comfort and avoidance of conflict.

As golfers, Peacemakers tend to be surprisingly streaky players, in part because of an often unresolved anger or tension that comes from constantly holding back their own dreams and opinions for the good of others. Although this anger rarely or never surfaces overtly, particularly at home or work, you might see sudden and unpredictable outbursts out of a Peacemaker on the golf course. In fact, behind Jokers, Peacemakers are the most likely to throw a club.

Inertia is the enemy of the Peacemaker, who too often encounters feelings of lethargy or tiredness as they approach important deadlines or activities. Peacemakers become accustomed to invisibility and putting themselves out in public can be a great challenge. Development requires the Peacemaker to put themselves out into the world, and allow others to be energizing mirrors for their own inner excitement. With practice, this inner excitement can lead to appropriate self assertiveness.

Peacemakers can find themselves waffling between true commitment to improvement and complacency in favor of other activities. Once committed, there is no finer type of player, and golfers of all levels will revel for an opportunity to regularly play with a professional of this type.

“Idleness is emptiness; the tree in which the sap is stagnant, remains fruitless”

– Hosea Ballou

A colleague of mine spent a month in Washington D.C. for business. At a meeting for recovering alcoholics, he heard a woman speak of her difficulty with keeping commitments. The colleague was attracted to the woman and asked her out. They exchanged numbers, set a date to meet for coffee the next day, and went their separate ways. The next day, my friend showed up for coffee and waited...and waited... and waited. The woman never showed. He called her later and she profusely apologized. She said it wouldn't happen again and asked him if she could meet for a movie later in the week. The date was set, and my friend showed for the movie at the agreed upon time and place. She didn't show. This time, the woman had remembered just before the date and left a message apologizing that she had missed the movie. This time, she asked him to come to her house the next night for dinner so that she wouldn't forget. My friend showed the next day and when the woman opened the door, she was dressed in a nightgown and slippers. She had forgotten all about it. When my friend told me the story, we laughed uproariously. “The first thing I heard her say was she has difficulty keeping commitments! What did I expect?” My friend was a Peacemaker and it was in his nature to try

to ignore or overcome people's faults without directly confronting them. It is also the Peacemaker's way to take on too much with other people, to expect more from them than they are capable of delivering. The lessons I have taken from my colleague's experience are that I cannot change people and I must accept the faults and limitations of the people in my life. Also, I can be clear in my expectations and boundaries rather than building resentments or disappointments at people failing to deliver my unspoken needs.

In performance situations, Peacemakers are prone to simply going with the flow, rather than establishing firm boundaries or swimming upstream. Developing an inner passion and consistently displaying it on the course will make Peacemakers excellent players.

Commit to Doing One Practice-Related Activity Per Day. Unlike many of the other types, Peacemakers don't have to reach for monumental change in order to improve. Simply doing one thing a day, periodically changing the routine to keep the practice interesting, will lead to success. You might commit to working on six-footers for an hour then switch to driving for an hour the next day. What you do isn't as important as that you do something. Developing a love for practice requires keeping it fresh and flexible. Until you have a finely tuned love for practice, working on your deficits will not be fruitful. A firmly established practice routine will enhance your enjoyment of practice and play.

Explore Your Resistance at Home. Peacemakers are a difficult Type to coach because they require a tremendous amount of introspection. They are critical of their own abilities and are keenly aware of the spiritual ebb and flow of their own mastery. Peacemakers are the golfers who will leave behind half a bucket of balls at the range because things weren't going well, and it just wasn't fun. The key to overcoming frustration and self-criticism is to schedule time for self-reflection and doubt at home. I once had a Peacemaker who would all but give up in tournaments when he felt things weren't

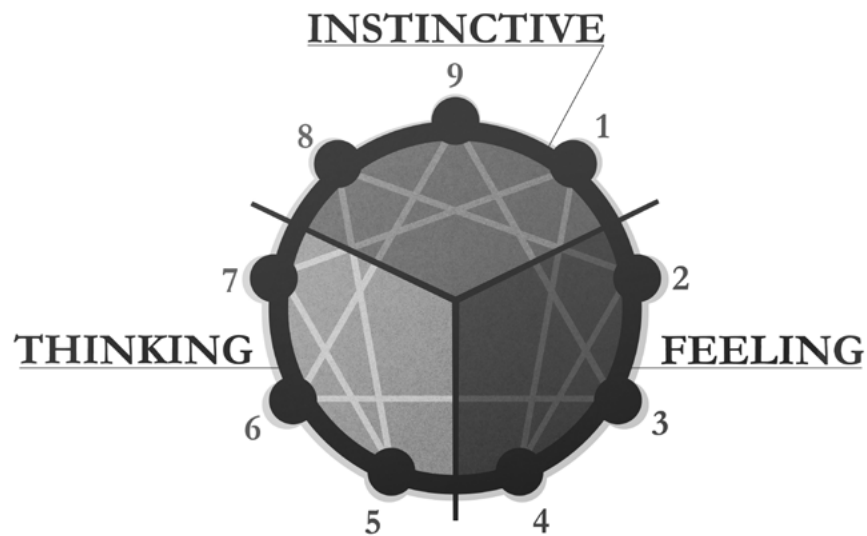
"feeling right." He was deciding whether to pursue a professional career during tournament play. When he scheduled time to journal or talk about his feelings with his wife at home, and when he agreed not to explore his resistance on the course or in practice, he found his fears and resistance stayed at home, and his enthusiasm and for the game blossomed on the course. If you have doubts about the game, explore them at home.

Famous Peacemakers: Arnold Palmer, Ronald Reagan, Walt Disney, Carl Jung, and Abraham Lincoln.



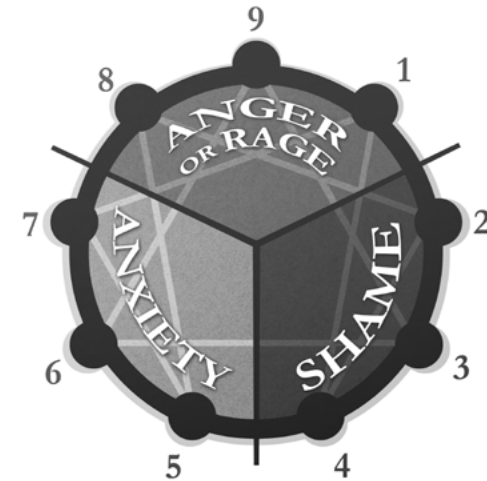
INTEGRATION OF THE TYPES

While each Type has unique properties, researchers have grouped them into categories or triads to help understand how we relate to one another. As the following diagrams show, Mavericks, Peacemakers, and Crusaders are primarily driven by instinct while Advisors, Achievers, and Mystics are driven by feelings. The thinking types are then Jokers, Sceptics, and Thinkers.



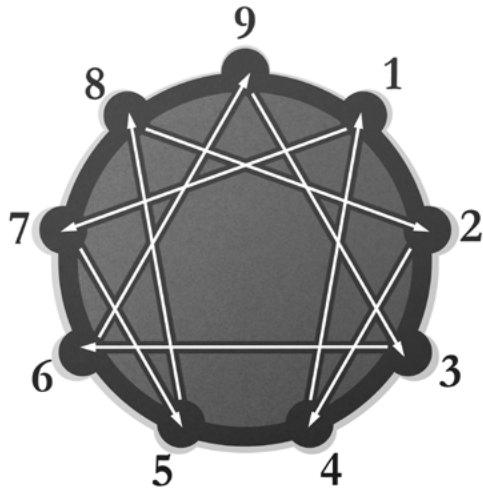
Research on the triads also teaches us that the types can be categorized by the dominant emotion that affects growth. As this diagram shows, the upper portion of the Enneagram is primarily affected by anger or rage, while anxiety and shame are the dominant emotions of the lower two-thirds. This does not mean that the types in these triads cannot experience a wide range of emotions, but that the types are particularly affected and express this emotion to a greater degree than the others.

For our purposes this should make us aware of our dominant and inferior

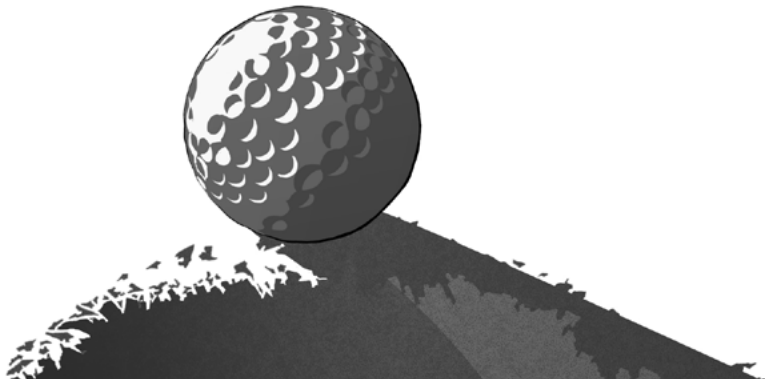


functions. In life, we tend to rely upon dominant characteristics or traits to move us forward in our careers or relationships. Some of us think our way around problems, while others feel or use intuition rather than observable phenomena. From a wealth of professional experience, I can tell you that the dominant function will inevitably lead to a plateau in performance. In order to move beyond the limitations that we experience in sport or life, we must be willing to move across the Enneagram to embrace our inferior functions.

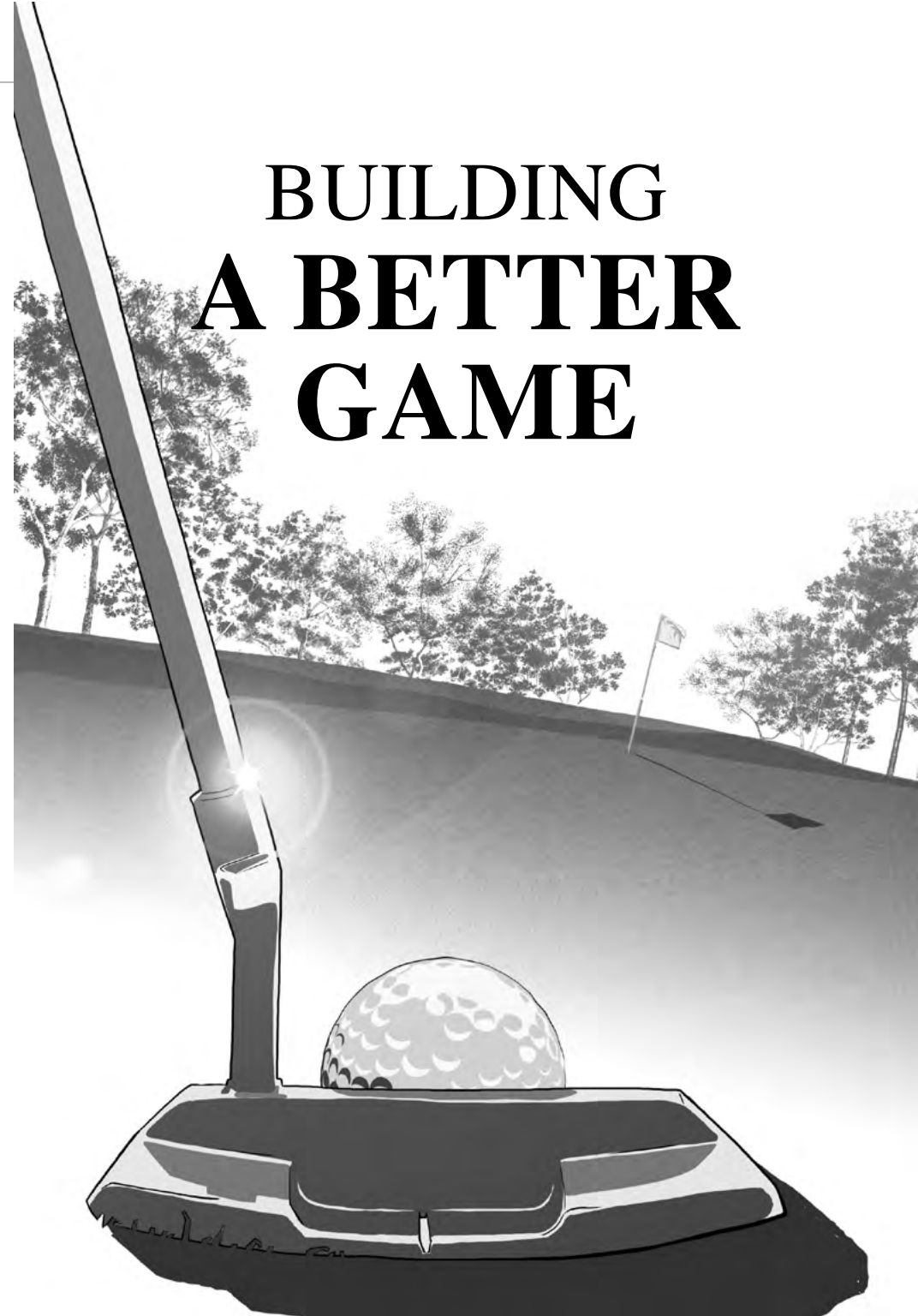
The process of accepting, embracing, and improving our weaknesses is part of what is called the direction of integration. This diagram shows how the types move toward more complete fulfillment of their personalities. For instance, the Crusader moves toward the characteristics of the Joker (such as greater level of worldly awareness, greater appreciation for humor and relationships, and greater attention to the feelings of others). Each of the types can benefit studying the way in which their healthy development flow and learn from models of the types toward which they must move for growth. The thinking types must constantly be challenged to stay in the process of the experience, rather than constantly evaluating and judging what is occurring. Feeling types have difficulty with concrete action and follow through. Making a plan, building accountability, and sticking to a decided course are essential.



As you consider these ideas, take time to reflect upon how your personality affects your decision-making in performance and relationships. Consider that you have conscious choices to make, particularly during times of stagnation, boredom, and stress. By becoming aware of the knee-jerk reactions that have brought you to where you are in life, you can begin to pick and choose the course of action that will lead you into your next journey. The Enneagram is like picking up a new roadmap for your future in the world. You can continue to use the same map you have used, but this will inevitably lead you to the same destinations. By choosing different decisions (even when it is uncertain or uncomfortable), you open the possibility for new discoveries and levels of happiness and achievement.



BUILDING A BETTER GAME



SKILLS EVALUATION

“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”

– Confucius

Before moving into ways to improve your game, I encourage you to develop a thorough understanding of your playing ability, current practice habits, goals, and a method for how you will approach coaching, practice, and reading the book. Like a good Boy Scout, we want to take a thorough inventory before our journey so that we can Be Prepared. Take significant time to answer all of the following questions and complete the exercises so that you can look back in time and evaluate your progress. You may also go to our website to complete a skills evaluation that will assist you in monitoring and prioritizing your efforts.

BALL STRIKING

ALIGNMENT AND SETUP

Alignment and setup are difficult to check without the use of coaches, assistants, or video. One of the ways to check alignment is to utilize multiple shafts parallel and perpendicular to your target line under your feet. Another is to pay attention to the divot you are creating during your shots. A solid setup and alignment should produce a divot that points toward the target.

Another setup issue is comfort. You should feel comfortable and balanced at setup. Your arms should feel relaxed and your back and stomach should feel extended. After you execute your shot, you should be able to hold your finish without swaying or falling back. These guidelines should be considered for all shots, but are particularly important in ball striking.

DRIVING

Driver Distance

From the tee with a driver, what is your average distance for 10 balls? Track your longest and shortest drives as well. As you repeat this skills evaluation, the distance between the longest and shortest should shrink over time. This is an important measure of consistency for all ball striking.

Driver Accuracy

From the tee with a driver, how many balls out of 10 can you hit into a 35-yard wide fairway?

APPROACH SHOTS

Iron Distances

Without using a tee, what are your average distances for 10 balls with each of your irons? Again, also track your longest and shortest shots as well. These numbers should be tracked bi-weekly and kept on a notecard in your golf bag. Controlling iron distances is extremely important to accumulate greens in regulations, and will assuredly improve your scores.

	SHORT	LONG	AVERAGE
Iron Distances			
Hybrid			
3-Iron			
4-Iron			
5-Iron			
6-Iron			
7-Iron			
8-Iron			
9-Iron			
Pitching Wedge			
Gap Wedge			
Lob Wedge			

Iron Accuracy

Without using a tee, hit 10 shots to a real or imaginary target. The target should be no larger than the flagstick. Track the average distance away from the target that your balls finish. Track this with all of your clubs, not just your mid- and short-irons. This will help develop a sense of the amount of error that longer approach shots can create.

Fairway Woods Distances

With and without a tee, what are your average distances for 10 balls with each of your woods? Again, also track your longest and shortest shots as well. These numbers should be kept on the same notecard as your iron distances.

Fairway Woods Accuracy

Without using a tee, hit 10 shots to a real or imaginary target. As with the iron accuracy evaluation, the target should be no larger than the flagstick. Track the average distance away from the target that your balls finish.

WORKING THE BALL

Place a shaft 15 yards in front of your starting point and directly down your target line. Hit 10 shots to the left of the shaft with right-to-left spin (cut) causing the ball to finish back on the target line. Hit 10 shots to the right of the shaft with left-to-right spin (draw) causing the ball to finish back on the target line. When you can easily accomplish this evaluation, alternate between shots working the ball to the right and left, forcing yourself to change setup and release on alternating shots. How many balls out of 10 can you successfully work the correct way?



PITCHING AND CHIPPING

CARRY AND ROLL

Place a range bucket, head cover, or obstacle halfway between the hole and a starting point just off the green. Hit 10 balls to the hole, forcing yourself to carry the ball over the obstacle. Track how many balls you can hit inside three feet (balls that don't carry the obstacle don't count, no matter how close).

Adjust the obstacle by moving it back toward you so that the carry is less than one-quarter of the distance. Hit 10 balls to the hole, forcing yourself to land the ball in front of the obstacle. Track how many balls you can hit inside three feet (balls that fly past the obstacle in the air don't count, no matter how close).

MEASURE BY MAKES

From within five feet of the green on a relatively flat approach to the green, how many balls out of 10 can you chip in the hole?

BUNKER PLAY

GETTING OUT

From a flat lie in a greenside bunker, how many balls out of 10 can you get out of the bunker onto the green?

SAND SAVES

From a flat lie in a greenside bunker, how many balls out of 10 can you get onto the green and one-putt?



PUTTING

SPEED CONTROL

From 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 feet hit two balls toward a hole or coin. Track the total distance away from the hole that the 14 balls finish. Also, track how many balls finish within 3 feet. Do not practice speed control by hitting from the same target more than twice.

READING GREENS

Pick 10 areas of the green with undulation. From 15 feet at each station, read the green using your eyes and by walking the length of the putt. Try to make the putt, evaluating the correctness of your read by whether the putt finished in or past the hole and whether the putt traveled on the “high side” of the hole. (If the putt breaks left, the ball should stay on the right of the hole until it passes the hole; if the putt breaks right, it should stay on the left side of the hole until it passes the hole). Reading greens takes practice and evaluating your ability is important to determine how much ongoing work is needed.

TIGHTNESS OF ROLL

A properly struck putt should roll end-over-end toward the hole. Draw a line halfway around the equator of a ball. From a flat lie, aim the line you have drawn at the hole and strike 10 putts. Evaluate whether the line on the ball pointed at the target throughout its roll to its finishing point. A tight roll will limit the amount of break you need to play and will help the ball “dive” into the hole, rather than falling over the edge.

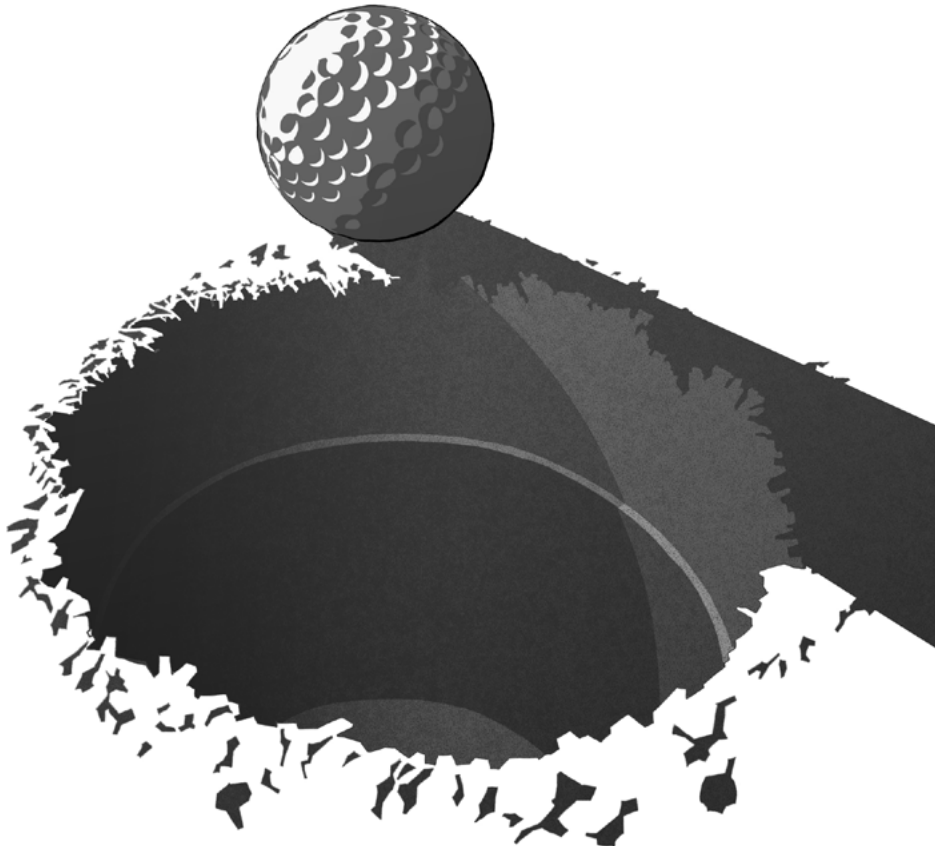
THE MENTAL EDGE

Assessing your mental edge can be difficult, but not impossible. During your skills evaluation and practice, pay close attention to the following variables: Sustained Attention, Staying Positive, and Emotional Awareness. Grade yourself out of 100 on how well you are able to maintain focus, remain positive (particularly after errant shots), and track your anxiety level and emotions during your practice sessions. Track these variables after every round and practice session as well, taking time to debrief after each to notice the causes of disruptions in your mental game. Pay attention to what types of distracters from your personal life affect your performance and become aware of performance barriers coming from off-the-course sources.



CONCLUSION

Evaluating your progress should be an ongoing process. I encourage you to spend an hour every month evaluating your game using this template. Don't measure just one element, but complete the evaluation in its entirety and track the results. This is valuable information for your golf instructor and can assist you in how you allocate practice time.



CREATING YOUR INDIVIDUAL TRAINING MANUAL

“Luck is where preparation meets opportunity.”

– Anonymous

While there is no single model for how an athlete should be trained, I look to guidance from the United States' Olympic training programs. Typically, any of the Olympic sports psychology programs involve hours of individual and team consultation, supervision of training sessions, travel to events, monitoring of imagery and relaxation techniques, and regular coordination with other training staff. As a PGA Professional, I am rarely the only member of a great athlete's development team. I encourage all of my athletes to include the best coaching for all elements of their play (swing, short game, mental, on-course strategy, fitness, and equipment). I work with the other members of the team to share responsibilities to maximize the athlete's time and potential. Without a collaborative system, athletes often find themselves working with coaches giving different messages that compete for time and attention. Many athletes eventually choose to develop a relationship with a single coach, who either delivers or coordinates these activities. One of my favorite students came to me after a successful stint as a professional, only to suffer from chronic fatigue and insomnia. In our initial conversation, he told me that he was managing his entire life and career without a team to assist him. Teaching him to give permission to others to assist him and to hold him accountable led to a dramatic turnaround in his mental well-being. The lesson I learned from him was that most people need a team with a central figure to provide accountability.

Good players and good teams follow a plan, or Training Manual you develop for yourself will only be as good as the information you acquire, the quality of time you put into the Manual's implementation, and the

ability of a coach to motivate, inspire, and communicate as you move toward your goals.

Some of the elements of a training manual to consider are:

- Coaching (Technical, Mental)
- Educational Sessions
- Debriefing
- Imagery
- Relaxation
- Exercise
- Strength, Flexibility, and Conditioning
- Training Routines
- Evaluation

A Training Manual is your performance project for achieving your goals. It should incorporate your values, Short and Long-term goals, a team of professionals and peers ready to assist you, and most importantly buy-in from family and friends. If the people around you support your decisions, you are more likely to continue toward your goal.

The first step in the development of your Training Manual is to develop a trajectory. As I wrote in *Inner Game: Breaking Golf's Unbreakable Barriers*, a goal is a specific outcome, such as wanting to shoot 65. A trajectory is a statement about where you'd like to be heading. For example: "I'd like to continue to get better over time and feel proud of my progress." You can measure whether you're getting closer or farther from your trajectory by many factors: how you score, what kind of shots you can hit, or how calmly you perform under pressure. A trajectory leaves the possibility that your particular goal might not be achieved, but that you are moving in the right direction and that something better might be in store. A trajectory leaves room for grace, miracles, and change of course.

Take time to develop a statement of trajectory in line with your values, commitment, and abilities. Once you have done so, it is time to develop the goals that will move you in the right direction. Remember that any project can be broken down into a series of simple steps. List as many small steps as possible needed to take you toward your trajectory. From this list, you can identify your short-term goals and the thoughts and actions that bring you closer toward longer-term goals.

A 30-Day Action Plan in the back of the book can help you categorize and track your efforts if you are not ready to develop a Training Manual. The key is to begin taking consistent actions toward your goal. Don't worry if the action is too small. Even the smallest step can create major change if done consistently. Start small to achieve big.

If you're ready to develop your Training Manual, start with the results of your skills evaluation and prioritize accordingly.

The following is a portion of a Training Manual for a collegiate player who I have taught for several years. Tailor your program to the amount of time you have to spend and the most critical areas of the game.



SAMPLE TRAINING MANUAL

Coaching (Technical, mental)

- Review my notes from my last lesson.
- Keep a list of questions for my next lesson.

Educational Sessions

- Review any training materials assigned by my coach.
- Read a book or magazine assigned by my coach.

Debriefing

- Discuss my daily progress with a peer or coach.
- Get feedback from family or friends on their support and observations.
- Write in a journal to share thoughts about your fears, and progress.

Imagery

- Visualize positive outcomes for 5 minutes at a time, three times a day.

Relaxation

- Take 10 minutes before and after lunch to sit in silence.
- Wake up 10 minutes early to create time to meditate or journal.

SAMPLE TRAINING MANUAL

Strength, Flexibility, and Conditioning

- Go to the gym at least three times per week for at least one hour each session.
- Complete the exercises assigned by a trainer for the home and gym.
- Exercise at home for 5 minutes at a time, three times a day. Alternate between sit-ups, crunches, push ups, dips.
- Walk after dinner for at least 10 minutes.

Training Routines

- Go to the range to practice three times per week for at least one hour.
- Warm up with a seven-iron, hitting pitch shots that build 10% each swing to a single target. Hit 20 balls in this manner until swinging full.
- Focus upon tempo, timing, rhythm and build confidence with small swings.
- Work to hit 3 balls per minute. No more, no less.
- Hit, Evaluate, and Integrate. Take time to review shots (feel, trajectory, and technique).

MONDAY

FULL SHOT

Work with the 3 Wood, hitting fades and draws. Start with the ball on a tee, slowly lowering it each shot until the ball is on the ground. Hit 60 balls and use a shaft on the ground in front of the ball as an alignment tool for shaping. Visualize a hole for the cut and a hole for the draw. Imagine yourself shaping the ball into the middle of the fairway.

SHORT GAME

Put a tee on the green where you'd like to land the ball (preferably no more than a few feet onto the green) between yourself and the hole. Hit five balls to the target, tracking how close you are to the landing area and hold.

Change locations and continue. To track how accurately you are at carrying the ball to the landing area and releasing to the target. Change the carry and total distance as you work to different holes to build

feel. Practice this drill for 35 minutes at a time.

For putting, place two shafts on the ground six inches apart and running parallel to one another. This should create a set of rails on the ground pointing toward the target. Placing your putter between the shafts, make 25 putts of 4-feet in a row. If you miss a putt, start over from 0. For longer putts, place two additional shafts around the hole forming a bumper to guide the ball into the hole.

Make 25 putts from 10 feet in a row. This should be made easy by the bumpers (which should prevent the ball from going past the hole in any direction). Make sure to line up all putts inside 10 feet with the logo or markings on the ball toward the starting line of the putt. Conclude the putting session with 40 lag putts to a tee. Make each putt a different length to build touch and feel.

TUESDAY

WEDGES

With the gap, sand, and lob wedges, hit shots in 5 yard increments: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and so on through the maximum distance for each club. 40 balls.

With the gap, sand, and lob wedges hit to three distances each (your full, half, and quarter swing for each club), trying to create piles of golf balls at those distances. For the first 40 balls, work through your clubs in order, taking time to build the piles from shortest pile (quarter swing) to longest pile (full swing). After you have hit 40 balls, begin to jump around through your distances and clubs, forcing yourself to change clubs and length of swings as you try to build the piles you have created in front of you.

DRIVER

Warm up with 20 balls, working on tempo and slowly building the length of your swing.

Place a shaft 20 yards in front of you along your target line and work on shaping the ball (right of the shaft and drawing back to the target; left of the shaft and fading back to the target). Hit 50 balls alternating shot shape. Remember to keep your feet on the ground with a solid base and track your clubpath on your practice swing.

Finally, visualize the two most difficult holes you play that require a shaped shot (one fade and one draw). Visualize these holes as you hit balls, creating the proper shot shape to deliver the ball into the middle of the fairway.

SAMPLE TRAINING MANUAL

THURSDAY

Irons

Full straight shots

PW – 10 shots

8 – 10 shots

6 – 10 shots

4 – 10 shots

Draw, fade, straight

4, 6, 8, PW

End with punch shots. Draw, fade, straight.

1 club each day.

SAMPLE TRAINING MANUAL

PUTTING

- Ring around hole from 5-6 feet.
- Have to make it around the ring of 12 balls before you can leave.

AFTER A ROUND COOL DOWN

- Room for improvement
- What shot can I hit better?
- 25 minutes

DAILY EVALUATION**WELLNESS**

- Fitness
- Diet
- Mindfulness and recovery
- Mental game

As you can see, the Training Manual is quite detailed, but the level of specificity and the fact that the routine is written down have created accountability and measurability.

PRIORITIZING YOUR EFFORTS

As you review your success in each facet of the game, remember that 50% of the shots you take during a round occur within 100 yards of the target. On a regulation golf course, we hit driver 13-14 times (remember Par 3s and short Par 4s), yet when I stand on the range the driver seems to be the only club seeing the light of day and the putting green is rarely filled to capacity. Work with a coach to develop drills and a practice plan that maximize your returns from practice.

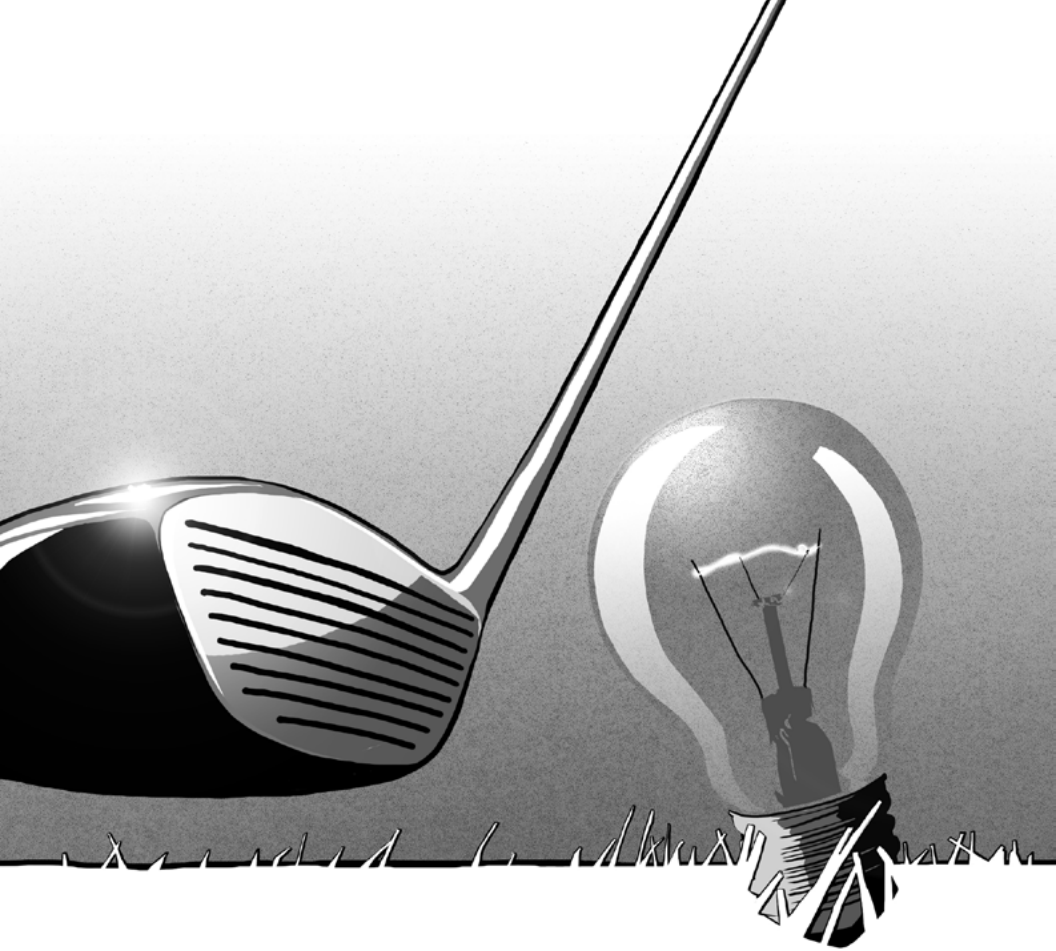
Finally, as you prioritize your efforts, keep razor-like focus upon the basic techniques of the game. Michael Jordan regularly credits his focus upon technique as a key factor in his success. The winningest female golfer in history, Kathy Whitworth, spent three days in her first sessions with Harvey Penick placing her hands on the club properly. It is important to build success with the completion and integration of skills. Moving from one problem to the next without mastering key points lengthens the learning process. Prioritize your efforts, maintain a solid foundation in precise technique, and engage in ongoing evaluations of your goals and development.

CONCLUSION

My favorite historical figure is Alexander the Great, a visionary leader who conquered and ruled from Great Britain to the middle of India, including Greece and Sparta, an amazing territory for the third century

before Christ. During his many military campaigns he took counsel from his aids and allies and won many treasures. The most prized possession from an early conquest was a silver box, in which he was encouraged by his advisors to place his most valuable object. He kept the box throughout most of his future campaigns, and in it placed an annotated copy of his favorite book, *The Iliad*, which told of the Greek's conquest and siege of the battle of Troy (a book that was likely given by his teacher, Aristotle). The book's place of honor illustrated Alexander's commitment to the values and importance of his teachers and vision. Of the thousands of people I have discussed changing habits and creating dreams, almost all have created a journal or document that shared their vision. Some of the dreams came true, and others not. But almost everyone had a moment where the journal found its way onto the floorboard of the car or the bottom of a pile of papers. I encourage you to remember Alexander, who despite marching thousands of miles everyday, kept his dreams and values closely guarded and near. Sliding back into old habits begins with simple and comfortable choices that seem like rewards for hard work. Be mindful, accountable, and aware of your goals and teachings. If what you want in life or athletics is valuable enough to make the commitment to change, keep your journal and plan close to you in a valued and visible place.





You Don't Have To Have Any New Ideas

“There are no new ideas.”

– Audrey Lourde

“An idea that is developed and put into action is more important than an idea that exists only as an idea.”

– Buddha

There is no shortage of information available to enhance peak performance in golf or any professional endeavor. With the right search parameters, the answer to any question you have is attainable. The biggest mistake most of us make in our lives is to assume that if we don't know something, it will never be known. The trick to improving is to seek out resources and mentors that have experiences completely different than our own. This runs counter to our normal way of interacting in the world. Studies have found that we tend to seek out people who believe the same things we do, and hold the same values. While this can create feelings of comfort and security, it is disastrous for breaking through performance barriers.

Most of us have expired all of our good ideas. We've followed-up on the ones that were within our comfort zone and let the rest fall to the bottom of the dark watery bottom of our minds. Peak performance requires a shift in consciousness, a commitment to follow different paths than the ones we have traveled. The best way to begin this new journey is to pursue new knowledge. It is out there. The path to peak performance can come through the biographies of successful athletes, artists, politicians, and coaches, or it can be found through traveling to new places or studying with teachers who share a different world-view. The danger is always that we will return to our comfortable thoughts and behaviors.

A story I have told in therapy for more than ten years goes something like this:

I was eating at a sidewalk café on a busy street under construction. A stranger is aimlessly wondering along the sidewalk where an overworked road crew has left an open manhole. Wanting to be helpful, I yell out: “Hey, look out, there's a manhole!” But the stranger steps into the hole and breaks both of his legs. A week later, sitting again at my favorite table at the sidewalk café, the same stranger (hobbling on crutches) seems intent on heading for the same open manhole that he fell down the week before. “Hey, wait! Remember the manhole!” But without a hitch in his hobbled

step, the stranger again falls through the manhole, breaking both of his arms. The following week, without fail, the stranger (now in a wheelchair) comes rolling down the sidewalk. I ask him politely, “Would you like me to help you down into the manhole?”

While it is sometimes impossible to stop others from making mistakes, you can ultimately help them through the pain. And for our purposes, you can either learn through the pitfalls of the journey or from the falls of others before you. One is much less painful.

Uncompleted Circles of Action

“At the heart of it, mastery is practice. Mastery is staying on the path.”

– George Leonard

“Nearly every man who develops an idea works it up to the point where it looks impossible, and then he gets discouraged. That’s not the place to become discouraged.”

– Thomas Edison

In a program in spiritual psychology that I attended several years ago, the lecturers hypothesized that every unfinished task leaves an open emotional or energetic doorway. It is as if a circle was nearly completed yet one last fragment remains, allowing all the contents to spill out. If multiple tasks remain uncompleted, we create a series of energy drains that can steal our focus and motivation. For many people, having several balls in the air promotes a feeling of creative tension. However, I suggest that mastery requires both an excitement for the chase and the enjoyment that comes from completion of a task.

Begin to close your uncompleted circles of action. Make a list of all the activities you have begun as an adult but not finished. Whether it’s spring cleaning, a belated birthday card, unfinished emotional business with a parent or spouse, or a model airplane never completed, take the time to finish as many tasks as possible. For the ones you cannot or choose not to complete, make a mental picture seeing yourself put away the task permanently. Close the circle around the activity. By making the decision to close the circle and not revisit that dream or desire, you free your mind to focus on your true desires. In the future, beware of endless to-do lists that never gets completed. Choose smaller, more attainable goals and follow-through to complete them.



The 10 Percent Rule

“The cost of a thing is the amount of what I call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.”

– Henry David Thoreau

“Money often costs too much.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“The real price of everything, what everything really costs to the man who wants to acquire it, is the toil and trouble of acquiring it.”

– Adam Smith

There was no more controversial statement in my last book than that your expenditures reflect your values and willingness to change, and that you should spend 10 percent of your income to golf if you want to get better. I’ve heard “you’re not married are you?” more than a hundred times. What I wrote before was that your words, actions, and spending reflect the message you would like to send to yourself and others.

You don’t have to spend a lot of money, but you need enough to be flexible, and to signal to the rest of the world that your commitment is valuable to you. You don’t teach your children or spouse about your commitments by withholding from yourself and you don’t want them to grow up running from their dreams and desires. Spending a little now, making a commitment to something you enjoy, teaches the people around you that your beliefs and dreams are important.

Spending is important for another reason: it’s measurable. You can track your spending and your time. I encourage you to do an inventory of your time and spending. They will tell you everything you need to know about who you are and what you value. Most people are shocked to find how

little they make, and yet how much time they spend working, sleeping, and watching television. At the same time, if you took a thorough inventory you might find that you spend little time trying to improve at anything. NCAA basketball coach Rick Pitino talks a lot about how teams develop complacency, particularly after winning championships. Once we’ve achieved a level of comfort we tend to fall into the trap of complacency and repetition. However, the world will continue to evolve; athletes will get better, stronger, and faster; and our situation will outgrow our habits. No matter what you value, you should be spending 10 percent of what you earn moving into the future in goal directed activities. In 2006 I spent 10 percent of my time and income earning a Master’s Degree in Business because I wanted to learn about how to be a better leader and employer. It was an investment I could have easily spent on a nicer car, vacation, or house, but those wouldn’t have improved my situation nor created opportunities for the future. Athletes spend much more than 10 percent of their time in practice, and it is no surprise that they perform better than nonathletes. How you spend your time and money will yield predictable results. If you devote only 2 of the 168 hours in the week on getting better at anything, you’ll probably get less than 1% better (the percentage of the time you spent in the week), and that assumes you have worked correctly and efficiently with good coaching. Answer the questions: who do my time and money say I am, what am I getting better at, and how fast am I getting there?



Zone of Optimal Functioning

“The difference between winning and losing is always a mental one.”

– Peter Thomson

Studies measuring the optimal anxiety level of athletes playing the same sport or even playing on the same team have yielded interesting results. It appears that all athletes experience anxiety, but perform differently under different levels of anxiousness or stress. Even playing side by side on a basketball team, one player may be highly charged while another remains relatively neutral, and both can be playing at the top of their game. However, what is more interesting is that research has found that athletes are excellent predictors of their future anxiety: they know as much as a week in advance whether or not they will be calm or anxious during an event. This likely has to do with level of preparation and the beliefs about the importance of the upcoming event.

The research on athletes' anxiety levels and performance also reveals another interesting fact: athletes are excellent at evaluating their optimal anxiety level by retrospective exploration, remembering their ideal performance and recalling their feelings during and preceding the event. In other words, just looking back at recent performances and evaluating your anxiety level, you can quickly deduce your ideal level of anxiety and focus. This process is very simple, and requires a mere willingness to sit down and review your performance, make some notes on the feelings and level of anxiety during optimal and non-optimal performance, and regular tracking of that anxiety level coming into an event.

To be more successful, spend time evaluating whether your level of anxiety will match with your individual Type and zone of optimal functioning for an upcoming round.

Work with your thoughts and a coach on developing mental training to regulate anxiety to spend as much time as possible in the zone.



What No Golf Professional In the World Wants you to Know

“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”

– William Arthur Ward

For the past five years I've worked very hard to put myself out of business. I tell my students everything I know about how to get better; I encourage them to practice and not take lessons until they've had a chance to integrate changes; I've used video and technology that they can use at home; and I give them drills to improve upon technical flaws that they can do in their practice at home and on the driving range. When students ask for weekly lessons, I'm happy to tell them that it won't help. Unless you are practicing three or four times a week, weekly lessons are a waste of money. Students would be better off spending the money on range balls, equipment, and time on the golf course.

I spoke with a Top 50 golf instructor who told me that there's much more written in books, videos, and magazines now than he will ever be able to retain or digest. Thirty years ago, the golf professional was an authority, a keeper of a verbal tradition of knowledge transmission. This is no longer the case. Many students now know as much or more about the golf swing as some golf instructors with the advent of The Golf Channel, Golf Digest, and Golf Weekly.

I believe that golf professionals aren't keeping up with the inevitable consequence of the amount of instructional information available. Students come to me with competing ideas about the swing, drills that bring out incompatible technical elements, ineffective practice

routines, and swing mechanics that are incompatible with their athletic ability, fitness and flexibility levels, and time to effectively integrate the changes. The golf teacher is no longer the repository of knowledge, but should now be charged with the duty of citizen-librarian, effectively communicating the knowledge and guiding colleagues through the process of integration.

A good instructor should not only be an expert in understanding the swing, but also an expert in biomechanics, technology, strategy, psychology and most importantly communication and logic. This is a daunting task, and requires a tremendous amount of skill and hard work. A good golf professional understands his or her limitations and can develop unique skills and competencies, will give students all of the information they need to improve, and risks that students might improve beyond their ability to need them. What no golf professional in the world wants you to know is how difficult the game is, how difficult it is to teach, and how much more important routine and repetition are than understanding dozens of reasons why things are going right and wrong. Ben Hogan said that the proof is in the dirt. Lee Trevino said that you get lucky by hitting thousands of balls. Gary Player said the more I practice, the luckier I get.

Most golf professionals now know little more than their students, but a good golf professional can integrate all of these ideas and elements into a coherent learning system. The system should focus upon practice and repetition and an acknowledgement that the professional is now an expert on that system, rather than the unmatched authority on the game of golf.



9 Principle Ball Flights

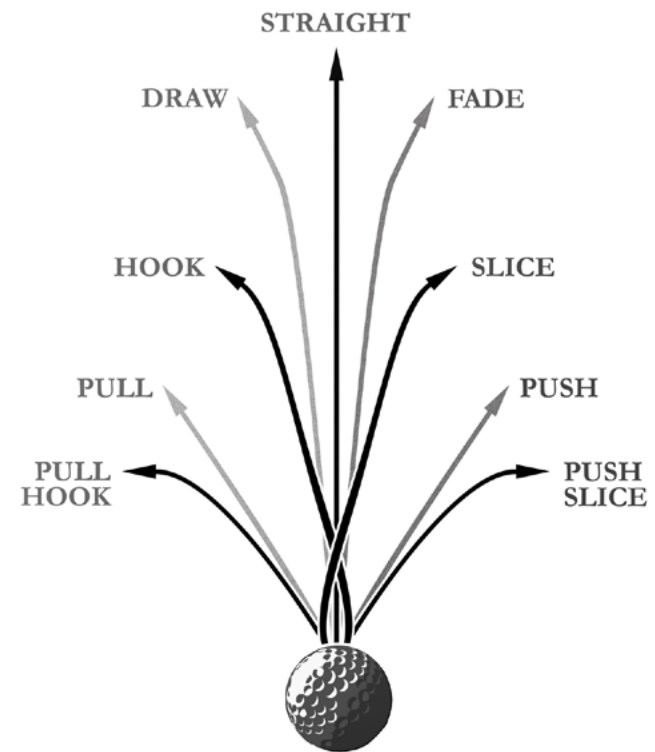
“The ultimate judge of your swing is the flight of the ball.”

– Ben Hogan

The golf ball gives you all of the feedback you need to improve your game dramatically. There are 9 principle ball flights. Shots can begin either at the target, left of the target, or right of the target. There are no other options. From their starting line, the ball can move either right, left, or straight. There are no other options.

Starting line is primarily completely influenced by the path of the swing, clubface, and ball velocity. A club moving straight down the line coming through the ball will start straight; a club moving from outside to in (or across the ball away from the player to closer to the player) will start to the left; a club moving from inside to out (or across the ball close to the player and then swinging away from the player) will start to the right. The golf swing is designed to deliver the club to the ball traveling as straight down the target line as possible. All swing mechanics should be executed with the bottom one foot of the swing in mind. Everything else, including backswing, hip rotation, wrist hinge, and posture, should be established with the sole purpose of delivering the club straight down the line at the bottom of the swing with a square club face. Its importance cannot be overstated: square path, square club.

Curvature of the ball is determined by the spin imparted by the clubface at impact. A closed clubface (or one pointed to the left) will cause the ball to curve to the left. An open clubface (or one pointed to the right) will cause the ball to curve to the right. A square clubface will lead to a ball flying with overspin or backspin, but will not curve either left or right. In one of Bobby Jones' famous recorded “How I Play Golf” series, a student asks Jones how to fix a slice. Jones correctly answers that there is no secret to fixing the slice -- except to square the clubface.



Pay attention to the path of your swing (evidenced by the divot and starting direction of the ball) and clubface (evidenced by the curvature of the shot). In practice, work to hit all nine ball flights to develop feel for the proper timing, mechanics, and release of the club. By doing so, you will have better command of your shots on the course.

Scrimmage

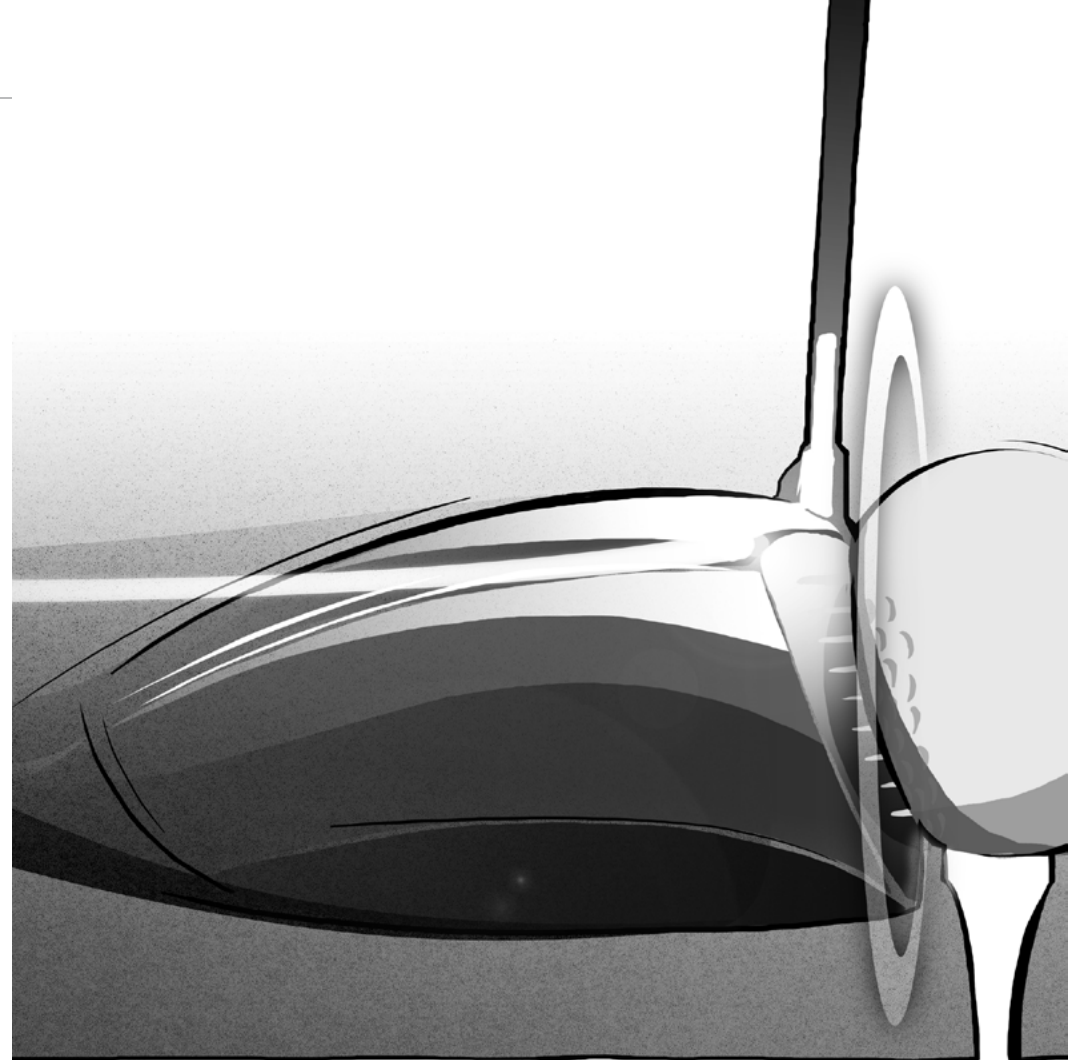
“People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing”

– Dale Carnegie

“But in the end it’s still a game of golf, and if at the end of the day you can’t shake hands with your opponents and still be friends, then you’ve missed the point.”

– Payne Stewart

When I was a child, our football and basketball teams had many layers of competitive evaluation. You didn’t simply arrive at the state championship, conference championship, division title, playoffs, regular season, or preseason. The layers of competition began with practice and scrimmage. Players at the professional level have multiple layers of tours and mini-tours culminating in the PGA Tour. Professional golfers work their way up these levels, evaluating and comparing their skills against their peers during the journey. Because golf is an individual sport, we miss out on the scrimmage, a competition without the formality or organization of tournament play. I believe that golfers could benefit from the scrimmage model by regularly competing against peers in short game, ball striking, and on-course challenges. With this type of activity, athletes broaden the enormous gap made famous by the Bobby Jones quote, “there is golf and there is tournament golf.” By regularly scrimmaging, athletes are better prepared for the pressure of competition, are more aware of anxiety levels and preparedness, and are given the opportunity to constantly evaluate the progress of their preparation.



Force In The Swing

“Force is all-conquering, but its victories are short-lived.”

– Abraham Lincoln

“Force always attracts men of low morality.”

– Albert Einstein

Golf is bound by the laws of physics and motion. Sir Isaac Newton's second law of motion holds that force is the product of mass and acceleration. In the golf swing, mass is essentially a constant variable. You will not weigh more by swinging harder, and you will likely only lose speed by incorrectly exerting tension and drawing your body out of balance and your club out of position. You will gain more acceleration by allowing gravity to work on the club and your hands to stay relaxed than by squeezing and throwing the club. Most golfers attempt to bypass the second law of motion by applying force at the top of the swing, yet forcing the club tends to change the direction and magnitude of momentum. By the time the club reaches the ball the club loses velocity and acceleration.

Applying force rarely produces the distance we desire and force without centeredness of hit produces wildly errant shots. As we all learned in geometry, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. I would rather have the ball moving straight toward the target than veering and curving away from it. When considering force, remember to stay relaxed and free of tension in the forearms and wrists, swinging with rhythm to allow the force of gravity to dictate the tempo of the swing.

Force In Relationships

“Don't force your kids into sports. I never was. To this day, my dad has never asked me to go play golf. I ask him. It's the child's desire to play that matters, not the parent's desire to have the child play. Fun. Keep it fun.”

– Tiger Woods

A significant portion of the athletes I coach are young men and women who aspire to be collegiate or professional athletes. I am often approached by parents who want to build their son or daughter's confidence or skills, after previous coaches have not been able to deliver championships or scholarships. While they range from age six to twenty, the problems are often common: lack of awareness, confidence, technical knowledge, and positive support from teammates, friends, and family.

Anyone who has watched sports at any level recognizes that parents can be amazing assets or liabilities for their children. When I was studying psychology in graduate school, I remember watching young tennis stars' fathers destroy the player's confidence and reputation by bad manners, domineering coaching, and interference with coaches who knew better than they did. Michelle Wie is the most recent star whose family has micromanaged her career, firing caddies and coaches and micromanaging their daughter's personal and professional life. While most coaches that I know are reluctant to take on athletes with what they call “overinvolved” parents, I actually believe that these athletes have the greatest chance for long-term success. I didn't always think that way, but some of my best students have parents that are amazingly generous with their time, support, and encouragement. Lots of students have come to me with talent, but the ones who prosper and develop are almost inevitably the ones whose parents are involved in the coaching and training.

Some of the advice I give to parents is:



You know your child best. No coach, no matter how insightful, will ever know the athlete better than the athlete's primary caregivers. While all athletes tell me secrets that their parents don't know, that doesn't mean I know them better. I only know a different part of them. I don't try to tell parents what they don't know about their children; I support them as parents and give them my feedback on what I feel is helpful and hurtful in the training environment. By choosing to focus only on the training, I find parents to be very helpful and involved. Whenever a discussion turns to homework, dating, or the athlete's friends, I listen, and listen only.

DEBRIEF

After every lesson with a child under 18, I debrief the parents. I let them know the technical elements we worked on during a lesson, review the drills with the child in front of the parent, encourage the child to involve the parent in supporting precise practice, and discuss any goals, barriers, or activities that will influence the coming week's practice. Parents leave feeling as though their child has developed new skills, that there is a plan and a follow-up evaluation, and that there is something they can do to support the training.

FOCUS ON ACTIVE PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents want to know what they can DO. I try to stay away from what NOT to do or say. I encourage parents to keep feedback positive and directed at the athlete's behavior, rather than personality. An athlete isn't "lazy," but needs structure around when and how to practice.

THE QUESTION

The question I help all parents learn to ask their children is: "What does your coach think?" Parents inevitably feel frustrated when athletes don't train or perform as they're expected. One of my favorite parents used to carry around a Golf Digest and give his son drills out of the magazine when

the parents perceived the son to be "slacking off" in practice. The father later admitted that he didn't know what to do, felt helpless, and wanted to do something. He felt that anything was better than nothing. Unfortunately, this ultimately led to a distance between the child and parent. The parent didn't want to admit he was powerless in the situation and didn't know what to do, and the child became less and less willing to listen because the advice wasn't from a seasoned professional who knew how to develop the son's talent. By encouraging the parents to come to training sessions or debriefing the parents after every session to involve them in the process, the parents' anxiety levels are reduced and they can better support their child in the training process.



Attention

“If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.”

– Marcus Aurelius

Attention, for our purposes, is the ability to optimally perceive and respond to stimuli. It is a limited capacity that must be developed. Some of the research on attention has found that anxiety and high levels of arousal have led to increases in sports injuries, failure to pay attention to significant environmental cues, focusing too narrowly, distraction, and ineffectively allocating mental resources to the positive performance of a task. In golf, the major problem is over-attention on the process of performance rather than awareness of relevant external cues and execution through automatic performance. Again, research supports the idea that the fewer mistakes an athlete makes, the less anxious they become and the less attention they spend on technical and environmental problems. Developing a game plan that minimizes risk and mistakes early in a round is critical to sustaining proper attention. Additionally, training programs should emphasize increased attention during the evaluation stage of a shot and a slow retreat of conscious attention throughout the preshot routine toward execution. In other words, you should be very focused on your lie, distance, club selection, environmental factors, and target as you approach the ball. After you have selected your club and begin to find a target or intermediate target, your mind should quiet and the execution of the shot should be automatic or routine. Ideally, the mind shuts off. If the conscious mind is active, it should be thinking of a single mantra, the target, or the feel of the rhythm of the swing. A wandering conscious mind will almost assuredly create an errant shot. Conscious attention should be upon the process rather than performance on the course.

In *Inner Game*, I recommended looking from the back of your eyes, or seeing a target with soft fuzzy eyes, rather than trying to “zero in”

on everything around you. If your eyes are strained or your facial and neck muscles not relaxed, you are likely engaged in concentration rather than focused unconscious attention. Concentration is terrific for practice. It blocks out the world and allows you to attend consciously to the movements of your swing and mind. On the course, trust the time and care you have utilized in your training and allow your body and unconscious mind to deliver the ball to the hole.



Mistakes and Opportunities

“Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan “Press On” has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”

– Calvin Coolidge

While every setback is an opportunity for evaluation and reflection, I am not 100% convinced that the word “mistake” shouldn’t be used in the psychology of enhanced performance. Many mental gurus believe that you should remain thoroughly positive, particularly during performance situations, and write off misfires as opportunities for improvement in the future. While I believe the basic principle of remaining positive and focusing upon what can be improved rather than what cannot, taking time to acknowledge our mistakes and honestly dealing with the anger, frustration, or disappointment is almost always the healthiest decision. Many people do not realize this, but during the past 10 years, the same individual has consistently led (including five years in a row) the PGA Tour in fines. While you might think meltdown experts like John Daly, Vijay Singh, or Rori Sabbotini would wear that distinction, the greatest number of fines is leveled against the Tour’s best and most visible player: Tiger Woods. Tiger is notorious for throwing clubs, though he does that much less frequently than when he was younger, but perhaps more notable for using the “F” word after a particularly poor shot (often while on national television). Tiger has not ever publicly discussed this to my knowledge, but I believe that he recognizes the difference between a mistake and an opportunity, and takes care to react with authentic disgust to mistakes.

Hitting a poor shot isn’t always a mistake. Missing a four-foot putt isn’t necessarily a mistake either. Mistakes in golf are errors in judgment or technique that occur despite focused concentration. For instance, if you set out to eliminate the right side of the golf course by playing a draw, commit to visualizing the left side of the fairway, focus upon closing the clubface at impact, and hit a banana slice despite practicing for weeks on eliminating that shot, you have likely made a mistake and should be frustrated. The mistake could be technical (like swinging the clubface off the intended path with an open clubface despite consciously focusing upon closing the clubface) or mental (like holding negative thoughts in your mind, not going through your preshot routine, or choosing a shot you cannot consistently execute). If you have committed 100% to that draw and rehearsed it endlessly, it’s okay to be frustrated with the double-crossed (or opposite) shot. But, if you haven’t committed 100% or haven’t rehearsed the shot in practice, the mistake is a mental one. You overcommitted to a shot you can’t repeat with high probability... a mistake. You should be angry with the fact that you’ve tried to do something you probably can’t do regularly....and therefore shouldn’t have tried under pressure. Mistake.

Most players make mistakes under pressure, attempting heroic improbable shots when caution is almost the better part of valor. 2007 Master’s Champion Zach Johnson played 20 Par 5’s on route to winning the event, going for the green in two shots exactly ZERO times. Despite never consistently holding the lead until the back nine on Sunday at Augusta, he never attempted a shot that he couldn’t consistently execute in practice, and played 11-under on the par 5’s for the week. Conversely, Tiger Woods hit overly aggressive (perhaps unnecessarily) shots that found the water or short side of greens, and left the ball above the hole twice in critical situations on Sunday that ultimately left him two shots back. Tiger is the first to admit his mistakes, and the first one to curse or vent when he does something he’s committed to not doing. Spending the time to acknowledge our mistakes and releasing the negative energy and frustration is valuable, provided you take the time to reinforce as strongly the positive decisions and outcomes you make throughout your practice and play. Remember that reinforcing only mistakes and negative

outcomes with emotional outbursts will tend to crystallize those thoughts in your memory and lead to beliefs that the results are consistent and entrenched. However, acknowledging mistakes can lead to opportunities for later self-reflection, ultimately leading to the positive outcomes we so strongly desire.

The U Curve

“Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better.”

– Pat Riley

The inverted U theory was proposed by Yerkes and Dodson in 1908, and researched by psychologists in the 1950s. The essential argument is that arousal and performance have a relationship such that performance improves as arousal increases, but that at a certain point, increases in arousal decrease performance. Optimal performance occurs at different levels for athletes, but as arousal increases or decreases away from this point, performance slowly decreases. This gives us two opportunities to improve our own performance: first, to identify our own optimal arousal level, and second, to learn monitoring skills to evaluate our arousal in performance situations.

The easiest way to learn to monitor your arousal state is through biofeedback. Sports psychologists may use skin temperature instruments, heart monitors, or brain wave monitors but you may also use a watch to measure your breathing and/or heart rate. When you are practicing or playing well, take a moment to observe how many times per minute your heart beats and/or how many breaths per minute you take. Observe and note these patterns over multiple practice or performance opportunities before making judgments about optimal levels. Also, be aware of food and water intake, as caffeine, sugar, complex carbohydrates, and heavy foods can all influence the body's functioning.

Moving In the Right Direction

“Procrastination is one of the most common and deadliest of diseases and its toll on success and happiness is heavy.”

– Wayne Gretzky

Procrastination is a familiar ally to all of us. I consider procrastination an ally because it is a protective blanket against failure. If we haven't started a task, we haven't failed a task. Every moment of every day there is a decision to be made. In each moment we have an opportunity to take steps toward self-improvement, self-destruction, or self-stuckness. Most of these decisions we make by sheer habit, rather than conscious attention. We build routines in our day to make time pass easier: meals, coffee, commute routes, work breaks, television shows, and bedtimes. These routines often serve only to maintain our sense of order, rather than inspire us to exceed our own possibilities. The routines can quite quickly lead to unhappiness and a deep dissatisfaction when we continually return to our own unsatisfying outcomes, yet we don't realize that we have created the chains that hold us.

Once you have identified a goal, vision, or mission, ask yourself every conscious moment you allow yourself whether you are moving toward your destination or away from it. The human mind has 10,000 conscious thoughts a day. I challenge any student to give me 1,000 of those toward improving their game. Some examples I encourage are positively visualizing shots, keeping a training grip with you while watching television, listening to relaxing music and practicing mindfulness, meditation, exercise, better dietary choices, and reviewing lessons or swing mechanics.

If you want to improve, you must devote time and energy. The time doesn't have to be spent at the course or range, but if there is no change in your habits, there will be no change in your life or game.

Learning On The Course

“Success depends almost entirely on how effectively you learn to manage the game's two ultimate adversaries: the course and yourself.”

– Jack Nicklaus

The most valuable lesson I have learned in teaching golf is that the game must be learned on the course. Range instruction and practice are not the same as on-course instruction. Modern ranges typically employ mats, which studies have shown can produce excellent shots with divots three inches behind the ball. I've had hundreds of golfers tell me they hit the ball great on the mats, but lousy when they get to the grass. No wonder. The range will not teach you to hit the ball from the rough or fairway to a target, and the range will certainly not teach you to manage the course.

Course management is nearly as difficult and complex as the golf swing. Learning when to execute particular shots, where to miss, and how to perform under a variety of situations takes time, patience, and attention. More than one golfer has developed a technically masterful swing only to fall apart when placed in a situation where half-shot, pitches, and strategy become more important than backswing and follow-through.

Some basic management techniques follow, but there is no substitute for spending an hour with a professional walking you through a round on the course. My teachers have always said, “There's no substitute for playing with a professional. You get to watch what they do and how they do it.” Spend the time and money for on-course instruction.



Strategy

“Success in golf depends less on strength of body than upon strength of mind and character.”

– Arnold Palmer

“Placing the ball in the right position for the next shot is eighty percent of winning golf.”

– Ben Hogan

The basic philosophy that I live by is: minimize risk, maximize return. Every shot you hit has a probability that it will be executed perfectly and a level of probability that it will be missed to varying degrees of dispersion. The key to any game of strategy is to make more higher probability shots than your opponent. In golf, playing the course means that we must respect the course architect’s design. Our own abilities must be matched with the layout, taking into account such things as our length off the tee and with our irons, accuracy, short game, and putting. An ideal round would not be one where we pulled off every miracle shot, but one in which we were never challenged to hit a shot we weren’t comfortable hitting. As Bob Rotella says repeatedly in his series on the mental game, we want to develop a conservative game plan and aggressive swing. The following are universal strategies that should be employed no matter your skill level.

Play to the middle of greens and fairways unless you have a wedge in your hand. Trust your short game and rely on your ability to get the ball in the hole from inside 100 yards. Be aggressive with your wedges; play the percentages with your other clubs.

Always putt the ball in or past the hole. Putts that don’t get to the hole don’t go in.

Side of the green, side of the approach. PGA pin sheets assist caddies with the exact depth at which a pin sits on the green, but Tour players want to know what side of the green a pin is sitting on before they hit their tee shot. An approach shot is almost always easier when it happens from the opposite side of the fairway. If the pin is on the right side of the green, you typically want to be on the left side of the fairway to “open up the green.” The basic strategy here is to give yourself the safest area to work with. Make shots easier by placing yourself with an ideal approach. Trust your eyes. Visualize your shot and trust that your body will compensate for any mechanical imperfections.

No short-siding. This is Rule Number One with my students when discussing strategy. Never short-side yourself. Never. Short-siding is when your ball lands off the green on the side where the pin rests. The consequence is a pitch or chip with very little green between you and the pin. The importance of this rule cannot be overstated. Short-siding invariably forces you to hit a low-percentage shot (typically a flop shot) in order to get close to the pin. Amateurs rarely perform well in this situation, leaving shots short when trying to get close or overhitting a flop shot because of the length of swing needed to get the ball high in the air.

Carry a learning orientation to the course and try your best to stay in the moment, working only on the shot at hand. Focus all of your attention and spend all of your available energy.

Know where you can miss, otherwise known as, great players miss in good spots. Club and target selection rarely involve just the yardage to the pin. A good player anticipates where an errant shot will go (short, right, long, etc.) and takes that into account as he or she assesses the shot to be executed. Course architects almost always give players bail-outs where a shot can be missed and dead man's land where there is little chance of recovery. Being able to read these situations, and to choose shots accordingly can save 5 or more shots a round. In fact, I've taken many students onto the course where they shoot their best score only by directing them when and where to aim away from trouble.

Fear and Denial

“You cannot prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair.”

– Chinese Proverb

“Sometimes the biggest problem is in your head. You've got to believe you can play a shot instead of wondering where your next bad shot is coming from.”

– Jack Nicklaus

Fear is an excellent teacher in that it shows you the limits of your zone of confidence and is a signpost to your growth. However, fear has no place on the golf course. To play any sport well, you must act with supreme confidence and faith. To do otherwise poisons the mind with negative outcomes that distract your conscious and unconscious mind.

Pete Marovich is an excellent example of a player who understood fear and its value. Marovich was an NBA player who took shots from everywhere on the court; shots other players wouldn't only not take, but would think were downright stupid. However, he practiced those impossible shots in practice, honing his skills and building his confidence. When he walked onto the court in a game, he believed he would make the shots. Whether he did or he didn't wasn't affected by his performance. For example, in the first round of a high school conference playoff game, he missed his first 19 shots before scoring all of the team's 8 points in double overtime. A reporter recalled that most kids in his situation wouldn't have attempted a layup, let alone a jump shot.

Marovich's story offers that the solution to fear isn't avoidance or denial. Bad shots are bad shots, and when you've put a few back to back, there's little reason to feel positive. However, what I have learned is that when you have an established routine and are extremely disciplined with your mental approach, there is no room for fear. The mind has a

limited capacity for conscious thought and if you flood the mind with the process of shotmaking, fear has no space in your awareness. It's like the idea that two objects cannot occupy the same physical space. Fear of poor execution and precise awareness of a routine are mutually exclusive events.

Control

“He who controls others may be powerful, but he who has mastered himself is mightier still.”

– Tao Te Ching

A student of mine supplied an excellent metaphor for playing in the zone. He said that he felt like a needle on a record player when things were going well. The needle doesn't know what's coming; it reacts to the subtle undulations within the record's grooves to produce sound. Most of us have difficulty giving up control, and some Types have more difficulty than others (Achievers, Crusaders, and Mavericks). While we hope to have the kind of detachment and present-moment awareness of the Zone, and while we always hope to produce optimal outcomes, it is important to point out the seven variables over which we have control inside and outside the ropes.

Time

Effort

Thoughts

Attitude

Choices

Commitment

Reactions to Success and Failure

If you have prepared thoroughly, controlling the variables above, you can do anything with a lack of fear. In a state of perfect preparation, there are no risky behaviors. If you can hit every shot comfortably or perform every task at work competently and repeatedly, the level of risk is extremely low. It is only when we are unprepared, when we have not maximized our time, effort, thoughts, attitude, choices, and commitments that we ultimately react poorly to success and failure. One of the most fascinating things about Michael Jordan revealed in the book *How to Be Like Mike* is that Jordan expected to succeed. He was surprised when



he and his team didn't win. He was genuinely surprised, not because he didn't respect other teams, but because of his conviction in the preparation and process of improvement that his teams followed. Jordan took losing personally and devoted himself to constant self-betterment. His attitude, paraphrased for our purposes:

Give them their due, but don't let them do it again.

Choosing a Teacher

“A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron.”

– Horace Mann

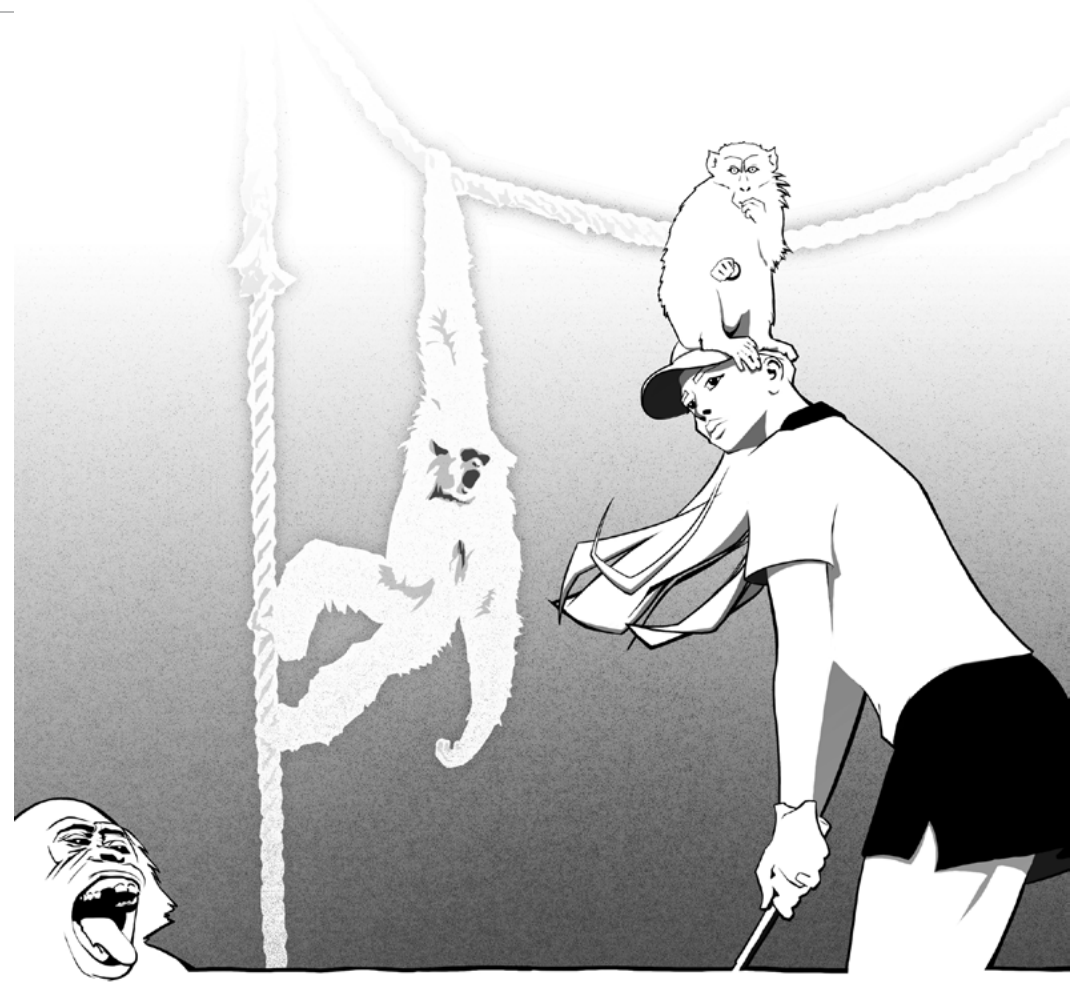
“The dream begins with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you to the next plateau, sometimes poking you with a sharp stick called ‘truth.’”

– Dan Rather

Roger Federer is among the greatest living athletes, and without doubt the best tennis player walking the planet. From the age of 10 to 14, he was coached by Peter Carter, who would spend hours discussing technique, strategy, psychology, and the value of carrying yourself in a professional way on and off the court. Carter and Federer's relationship was extremely close, and Federer is said to have spent more time with Carter than his own family. During this period of his life, Federer was a temperamental child who threw rackets and shouted on the courts during practice and tournaments, but Carter worked hard to teach Roger that these outbursts were energy wasting and unproductive. Federer eventually left Carter to study with another coach, but when Carter was killed in a safari accident in 2002, the death profoundly influenced the way Federer approached tennis and relationships.

Some of the key features that have been identified by researchers throughout the literature on sports that are critical in any team or organization are organizational culture, significant and goal-directed resources and support, communication and open atmosphere, focused long-term planning, established internal procedures, a high activity level, efficiency of processes, motivation to realize aims, interest in the athletes, and a motivated and high caliber set of directors and external liaisons. However, what research across sports has shown is that there must be significant and constant attention paid to the athletes who drive toward a mission.

Good coaches do more than simply give you tips and drills. Good coaches reinforce the basics by communicating any idea in a variety of ways using multiple drills and training aids, fight boredom with excellent and varied communication, and keep you interested with new drills, settings, and shots. But finally, good coaches also take the time to get to know your personality, your tendencies, and the frustrations and desires that will lead to your success. I have no doubt that Federer would have been a great player without a coach like Carter, but few athletes and coaches take the time to build relationships together. When you choose a coach, choose one you will trust with your game and your development as a human being.



The Monkey Mind

“Chaos is a friend of mine.”

– Bob Dylan

Eastern teachings share that the mind is like a monkey, bouncing around from object to object randomly and impossible to quiet or control. Like grabbing at water, our ideas flow away from us as we attempt to quell them. The greater we move to control, the more intense become the pressures of our mind to be free. Two very simple techniques to harness and learn from the mind are what I call The Movie Screen and Stock Ticker. They are practiced simultaneously for brief periods when you are quiet and alone. The Movie Screen is very simple. You simply project your visual thoughts onto an imaginary movie screen, watching your thoughts as though you were sitting in a movie theater, a passive passenger on a journey through your thoughts. You don't control what goes on the screen, just observe. One of the unique features of this movie is that it is silent, but with subtitles. Imagine the dialogue or commentary is taking place as subtitles, endlessly scrolling across the bottom of the screen from left to right like a Stock Ticker. After you have learned to observe your thoughts in this way for a period of some time, you can begin to slowly alter the movie and the subtitles, but only its speed. Don't try to direct the movie or the subtitles. Simply observe, but take the opportunity to play it faster and slower. When you can control its speed, the most difficult part is to try to turn off either the subtitles or images on the screen.

I am not a terrific practitioner of the art of mental control, so it is difficult for me to hold the idea of a blank movie screen for more than a couple of minutes, but I find that when I sit for a long period of time observing the monkey mind through the images of the Movie Screen and Stock Ticker, I can spend greater periods of time imagining the screen and ticker remaining still. The less time I spend observing the contents and process of my mind, the greater chance I find that the Monkey Mind will gain my attention when it is least desired.

Visualization

“It’s the repetition of affirmations that leads to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.”

– Muhammad Ali

Jack Nicklaus credited his mental ability for much of his success in golf. He wrote that golf is 40 percent setup, 50 percent mental picture, and 10 percent swing. In *Golf My Way*, he discusses the steps of developing an in-focus picture of every shot he took, in practice and on the course. A fade was produced by visualizing the path of the swing and the trajectory and shape of the ball as it traveled in the air, falling to the right onto the bright green of the fairway or putting surface. He moved from seeing the picture to feeling the setup and swing that would produce the outcome to the execution of the shot.

Visualizing will improve your game. Period. Numerous research studies with golfers, swimmers, runners, basketball players, and football players have demonstrated that practicing visualization universally improves performance, yet very few people take the time. Create a Visualization Log. It doesn't have to be complicated, but take the time to “Clock In and Clock Out.” Write down the time you start working on your visualization and work diligently to keep your mind on the task of seeing the types of shots you would like to create in your golf game. Spend the time in as quiet a place as you can find. If you need to keep the log in the bathroom, fine, but spend increasing amounts of time practicing your visualization. This one very simple assignment will pay dividends.

GOING TO THE MOVIES

Everyone has a favorite movie, favorite scenes, favorite dialogue that they can recall from memory. Do you remember what made the scene memorable? The words, setting, costumes, facial expressions, and sense of place that the movie delivered. Time stood still, or something like that. We want your visualizations to be Oscar quality. Imagine not just

the course, but the wind, trees, crowds, pressure, smells, situations, and feelings that come from the picture you are creating in your mind. If you're going to take the time to make a picture, make it Oscar-worthy.

FEEL

After a rudimentary understanding of the swing and practice, the body is fully capable of hitting perfect shots; your mind is the barrier. Recall from Jack Nicklaus' discussion of the swing that he moved from seeing the picture to the feeling of the setup and swing that would produce the outcome he saw in his mind. The movement of the picture to the feel is probably the most underdeveloped mental skill in the amateur golfer. Most players think only with the left hemisphere of the brain, trying to understand the linear process that produces outcomes. The left brain processes information in symbols, explanations, and numbers. Players that understand and can explain how they do something (technical players) are utilizing the left brain more than the right. The right brain is responsible for the creative and intuitive processes, and studies of great athletes find that most employ exclusively right brain activities during performance. Moving from seeing to feeling must be part of practice and pre-shot routines. Moving from the picture to the technique that produces the shot is relying too heavily on the left side of the brain. It is failing to let go and utilize the power of the unconscious to produce the outcome.

Incorporate both visualization and feel into your routine, working toward a state of consciousness on the course that sees and reacts to pictures rather than technique.

See It, Feel It, and Reward Yourself to Be It

“When Michelangelo was asked how he created a piece of sculpture, he answered that the statue already existed within the marble... Michelangelo's job, as he saw it, was to get rid of the excess marble that surrounded God's creation. So it is with you. The perfect view isn't something you need to create, because God already created... Your job is to allow the Holy Spirit to remove the fearful thinking that surrounds your perfect self”

– Marianne Williamson

Achievement is not an activity, but a process. In his book *Prisoner of Trebekistan*, Bob Harris describes the process of becoming a Jeopardy champion. A contestant more than a dozen times, he won more than \$150,000 on the program and participated in the Ultimate Tournament of Champions in 2005. In advance of his first appearance, he turned his apartment into a Jeopardy soundstage equipped with blinding lights, bookcases turned podiums, ballpoint pen hand buzzers, and a standup picture of Alex Trebek. He turned the air conditioning down to simulate the temperature of the auditorium where the program is filmed, and altered his diet and sleeping patterns to best fit with the rhythms he would be experiencing during his time on the show. Bob Harris didn't just read books and study facts; he visualized winning, visualized being on the program and the pressure, and prepared as thoroughly as he knew how.

As Bob Harris demonstrates, the process of achievement begins with a personal mission that has passion, commitment, and integrity. From this, specific measurable goals will arise to direct your short-term efforts. Spend time to visualize the many moments and outcomes that will support your goal, and remember the many rewards of the journey that you will have along the way. The lines below are intended to help you



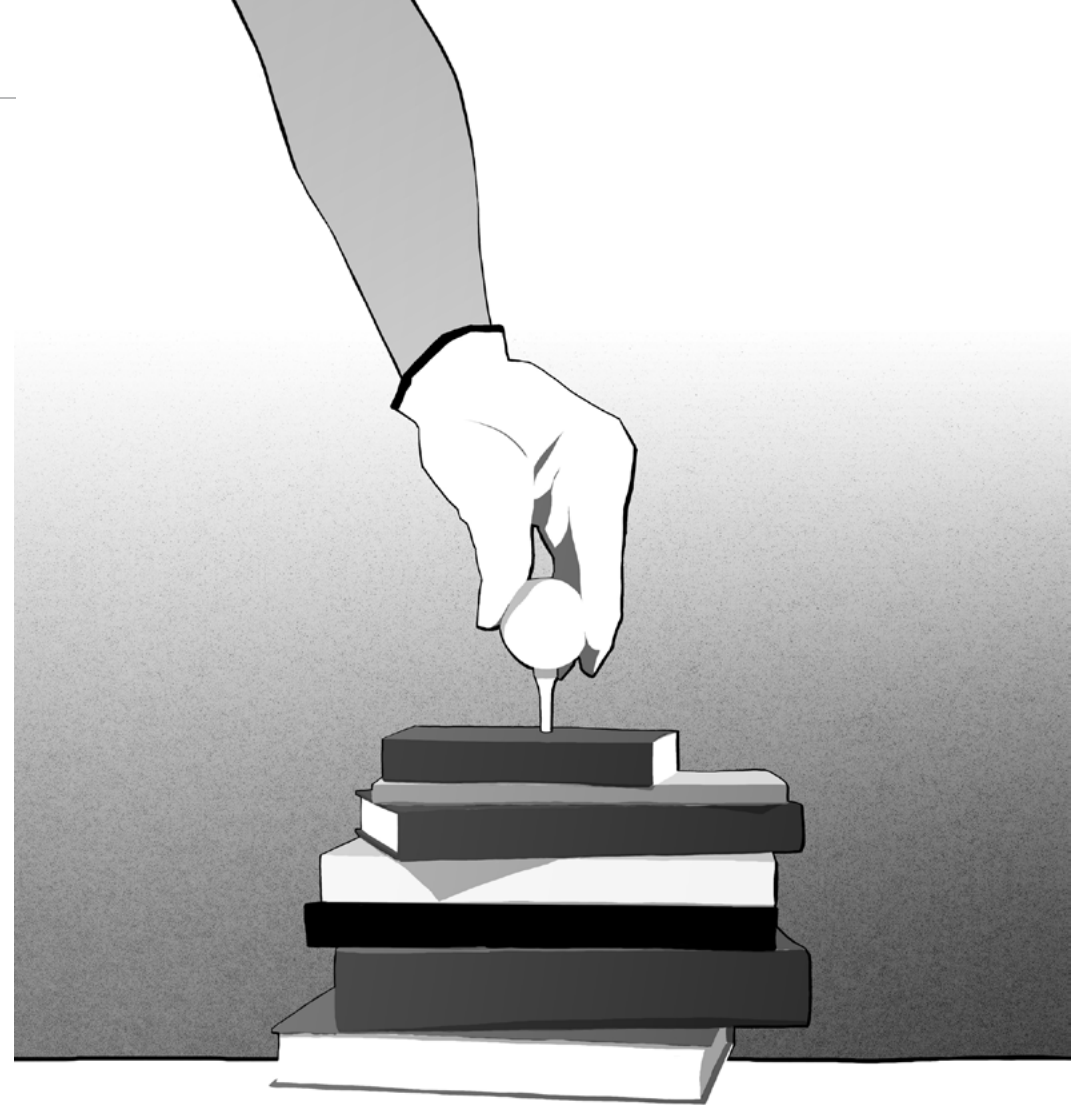
understand that these build upon one another, and that the content grows as you move from mission to goal to visualization. A clear mission and goal are not terribly helpful without a wealth of exact positive pictures to support your progress. Finally, reward yourself and acknowledge the process of moving toward your goal. Take time to feel good about what you're doing to support future progress.

Mission:

Goal:

Visualization:

Reward:



For Every Season

“The more technique you have, the less you have to worry about it.”

– Pablo Picasso

It has always amazed me that Oklahoma State is year after year among the top collegiate golf teams in the country. How does a school with a playing season of less than 8 months compete with programs from the West Coast whose athletes can play year-round? Growing up near Oklahoma, my golf season was quite short, and regularly interrupted by weather even in the supposedly kindest of months. What I learned later in life is that there are many players who thrive in geographic regions where the playing season is less than six months long. I took the time to learn their secrets, and I believe it can help you no matter where you live.

The key to how players from regions with a shortened playing season improve is what I call winter practice. Rather than packing his clubs in his garage and shutting down his teaching schedule for the winter, my teacher taught throughout the winter and his players came out in the spring with energy and improved technique. He did this by “Playing without the sky.” In the winter, he would set up a net and work exclusively upon technique. By working with the net, attention is forced to the moments before impact, rather than the moments afterward, over which we have no control. Most players spend most of their attention on the ball. Again, a mentality that The Ball is The Enemy rather than being an extension of the golf swing.

Winter practice assists players with attention, drawing focus back to the moments where they control the swing, rather than hopelessly praying that the ball will change direction or trajectory in the air.

No matter where you live, practicing with a net or on a grass driving range, spend more attention to your swing and technique. The ball’s trajectory and shape are excellent summations of what occurred at impact, but they also detract your attention from the movements of the body that delivered the club to the ball.

Working without the sky allows us to be mindful of our technique, ingraining good habits and freeing us to focus upon feel and visualization on the course.

Observational Learning

“The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands.”

– Benjamin Franklin

Research on learning has taught us a great deal about how to best master new concepts. According to psychologist Albert Bandura we can learn by observing other athletes almost as well as if we were practicing the physical motions ourselves. This learning happens in four stages as we: attend to the activity we wish to learn, retain the activity, reproduce the activity with our bodies, and are motivated to continually reproduce the behavior through mental and physical practice. Subsequent research has confirmed Bandura’s theory and, for our purposes, this teaches us that we don’t have to be at the driving range beating balls to improve.

For students who don’t have access to practice facilities year round, or during periods where they aren’t able to practice or play at the course, I encourage a regimen of observational learning. Choose a professional golfer with a body-type and swing similar to your own and study the positions, movements, timing, and tempo employed by the golfer using slow-motion video (this is now widely available for free on the Web). Observe the motions and retain them through repetition or note taking, reproduce the movements as best you can (preferably in the mirror), and stay motivated toward reproduction of these motions in physical and mental practice. Remember that the keys to acquiring and incorporating new knowledge occur toward the end of the process, where reproduction and motivation are essential. Your Type has great influence on the way in which you are motivated to improve.

Psychologist William Glasser argues that we are motivated by power, recognition, fun, freedom, love, belonging, and/or survival. Become aware of the reasons for your motivation to fuel the fire that drive you toward success. Review this set of motivators and restructure your beliefs to maintain motivation and your efforts.

A Growing Storm

“Every great player has learned the two Cs: how to concentrate and how to maintain composure.”

– Byron Nelson

One of the most self-aware conversations I have had multiple times with players starts with their observation that they are not feeling confident. The conversation happens with as much frequency for me with beginners as with collegiate or professional players. We all lose confidence in ourselves and our abilities and the phenomenon is a natural byproduct of being focused upon outcomes. We don't always perform our best in practice or competition. We all have days when it looks easy and days when we struggle. The very simple sounding answer is to focus upon the positives, but this is incredibly difficult for some (particularly Thinkers and Skeptics). Whenever your mood or state of mind is negatively affected by your performance, there was a moment when you began to accumulate evidence for an undesirable pattern. The moment this happens, you must take contrary action. Don't allow a cloud to become a storm. You must recommit yourself to your preshot routines, practice regimens, and focus upon the target, timing, and tempo. Whenever you begin to accumulate evidence for an undesirable pattern, you should also consult with your coach as soon as reasonably possible. The worst mistake is for you to continue to question and doubt and to struggle to a solution (as you consciously or unconsciously try to remove the fear of negative outcomes). Players become negative by practicing bad mental habits, and by focusing upon negative outcomes rather than the routines and steps prescribed by their coaches and peers.

Building Your Network

“You become what you believe yourself to be and you believe yourself to be what those around you believe you are.”

– Dr. Mac Powell

My future work as a psychologist will largely be based upon my belief that we are constantly shaped by the impressions of those around us. When we surround ourselves by people who love us and see us as worthy, capable, and competent, we quickly become worthy, capable, and competent. When we surround ourselves with people who doubt our competence or worth, developing and maintaining our skills isn't impossible, but it's not incredibly likely. I am personally mesmerized by the choices that athletes make with respect to the people they let into their lives.

Great athletes befriend men and women who share a high degree of personal responsibility, achievement, drive, and civic responsibility. I believe these choices have formed networks or communities that help to build the dreams of those involved. Having worked with or supervised the cases of thousands of adolescents as a social worker and therapist, I can share that being successful has as much to do with the choices of friends as intelligence or talent. Choosing friends who challenge you, who believe in you and hold high expectations and levels of accountability, will pay handsome dividends. If people in your life refuse to see you as a person who is growing, and they only see the history of who you have been, help them to see you as you want to be seen. If they cannot give you the freedom to become more than what you have been, the best decision is to move away from the relationship, at least temporarily. It is my strong conviction that you become what you believe yourself to be and you believe yourself to be what those around you believe you are. As you make better choices in the people with whom you share your dreams, your dreams are more likely to become reality.

Positive Reinforcement

“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.”

– Vincent van Gogh

The Leadership Challenge by Kouzes and Posner is an excellent resource for leadership and understanding the importance of small steps in the learning process. One of my favorite stories from the book is from Rayona Sharpnack, a very successful professional softball player who coached her daughter’s first little league team. The first day of batting practice, the girls hid their heads and screamed as the ball was tossed toward them. Rayona went to her car and drew smiley faces on the balls with different colored markers. She asked them to tell her what color the smiley faces are as the ball was tossed by them in the batter’s box, and the girls excitedly got the colors right, one after the next. Finally, she asked them to touch the smiley face with the bat.

They beat their first opponent 27 to 1.

The weakest muscle in the body is the one between the ears, and I am amazed by the lack of time golfers spend developing the mental aspects of the game. I’ve seen thousands of golfers with amazing technical ability, but little or no understanding of how they should think on the golf course. In fact, of the thousands of students I have asked, less than 1% of students can accurately recall what they were thinking during the execution of a shot on the course. Lack of mental preparation makes technical preparation next to useless.

Setting up simple challenges and breaking the game into small achievable steps is the best way to improve. Remember that Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times and Abraham Lincoln lost six state and national elections before being elected President. Setbacks are only permanent if you quit.



Mindfulness

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought.”

– Buddha

“Concentration is the secret of strength.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

My suggestion is to begin to think of good mental abilities in terms of your ability to be mindful rather than intense or deep in concentration. The mind is not able to view itself objectively, meaning you can't think about your thoughts without changing them. On the golf course, we would ideally play without any overt conscious thoughts. We would react calmly to what is in front of us, moving forward from one shot to the next. This process of 'being in the zone' is not a magical state of being, but a state of mental tranquility that can be practiced and utilized like any tool or weapon. Practicing tranquility requires practicing mindfulness, attentive to the thoughts that move you away from mental stillness. These thoughts are typically ego driven: "I should have done differently, I should have made that putt, don't hit it in the water," and other fears and possibilities beyond simple execution of your on-course strategy. Put differently, plan ahead, practice all known possibilities, and trust that the game plan will work better than any alternative. Don't change your stroke or strategy no matter what happens. Have fall back shots and routines that you trust so that the round can be only about execution. The mind should be your greatest ally, and the toughest mental game can overcome poor shots and bad breaks.

Because the mind cannot perceive the same phenomenon in the same way twice, your experience clouds your perception of everything around you. For instance you may experience feelings of excitement or wonder the first time you see a course or a mountain or a beautiful woman, but the experience will never be the same. For performance, this is valuable information at a number of levels. First, our initial experience is critical in athletics. The impressions we form shape all future impressions, though to varying degrees of intensity. If the mind forms an association of fear or apprehension, performance will be impacted. Like prejudice, we often take for granted the way we experience the world, though this is short sighted. We experience a billion sensations a day, but form only 10,000 thoughts. We attend to selected factors and ignore others. Attending to the optimal set of stimuli is the basis to a powerful mental game.

Finally, variations in the thoughts that precede shots aren't necessarily bad. Small thoughts telling you are misaligned or over-reading a putt

can be treasures, but you should create a back-off policy to acknowledge the variations in thought, make necessary corrections, and quickly move back into your routine.

How to practice mindfulness:

- Chart your thoughts through your practice routine.
- Monitor variations.
- Observe what the observations consequences are off the course.
- Create routines to back-off shots when variations occur.



In The Zone

“Concentrate all your thoughts upon the work at hand. The sun’s rays do not burn until brought to a focus.”

– Alexander Graham Bell

Being in the zone or flow is the ultimate goal of the peak performer. This state of zenlike mindfulness is characterized by a seamless blending of the conscious and unconscious where the athlete achieves total concentration, the merging of action and awareness while losing self-awareness. Achieving this state, according to the guru of flow – Susan Jackson, are the developments of a positive mental attitude, positive precompetition and during competition affect, maintaining level focus, physical readiness, and the perception or belief of thorough preparation.

In your Training Manual, track the times at which you enter the zone. Immediately after write down the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that you felt just beforehand. Building a positive mental attitude and creating positive mental habits takes practice and mindfulness. The other elements of building an expressway to the zone (physical readiness and thorough preparation) require as much work or more. Believing in your abilities requires an extremely high level of determination and persistence. If I try my best at something, if I give it 100% of my effort, I am rarely disappointed with the outcome, win or lose. However, when I don’t work hard in preparation, when I don’t feel as though I’ve given my all, I am almost always disappointed with the outcome, win or lose. My students know in advance whether they will do well in a tournament because they have worked hard and have the confidence built from repetition and good habits. They also know in advance when they will likely do poorly because they have not prepared.

All of us have experienced that grace or flow where the difficult becomes effortless. Entry into the zone is a delicate combination of confidence, preparation, and positive mental habits.

Optimistic vs. Realistic

“I have had dreams and I have had nightmares, but I have conquered my nightmares because of my dreams.”

– Dr. Jonas Salk

“If you see ten troubles coming down the road, you can be sure that nine will run into the ditch before they reach you.”

– Calvin Coolidge

Research on optimism has yielded fascinating results. Two athletes with identical skill sets and history of success will perform differently based upon their beliefs about whether or not they will successfully complete a particular task. In studies on performance, athletes who believed they would succeed in a task outperformed athletes who were realistic or pessimistic about their chances of success (even though each type of athlete might have began with identical skill sets and history of success). The body of research on optimism, realism, and pessimism tells us that in terms of performance situations across all sporting activities, optimists perform significantly better than pessimists and slightly better than realists.

From experience, it is difficult to cultivate a sense of optimism and much more easy to develop a realistic or pessimistic attitude. In fact, research suggests that this is part of an individual’s personality that is developed quite early in childhood.

When I teach courses on behavioral change at universities, I tell my students the story of an insect placed in a jar. If you place the insect in the jar and hold your hand over it, the fly will repeatedly bounce off your hand searching for a way out. In time, however, the insect will stop trying, and even when you remove your hand, the insect will not leave the jar. A similar phenomenon happens in the training of baby elephants (a story told well by Deepak Chopra). The baby elephant will not leave

its mother when it is young, and if you tie a string to its neck and stake the string into the ground near the mother, the elephant comes to believe over the course of its life that it is held in place by the chains handlers use. Of course, this is ridiculous. An elephant could drag an entire tent and no set of chains could truly hold it. Both examples teach us that we learn to become helpless and incapable of achieving particular results. Regaining and retaining optimism requires a sense of purpose, mission, and faith. Thoughts that work against your purpose should be noted, thanked for their no longer needed purpose of fear and caution, and obliterated. Learning to be optimistic is a similar process to learning to be helpless. There must be constant affirmation that you will achieve your goals and little to no attention given to pessimistic (or even realistic) beliefs to the contrary.

Stay in the Process

“Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.”

– Henry David Thoreau

Avoid what Deepak Chopra calls “emotional turbulence” by releasing grievances and maintaining a clear mental space. Numerous studies have found that meditation, yoga, and mindfulness training can decrease stress, improve performance, and facilitate health and happiness – yet few people practice these skills. We are caught in the lie that working harder and achieving more will quell our feelings of restlessness and dissatisfaction. Focusing solely upon the acquisition of rewards and achievement, to the exclusion of the process of improvement and enjoyment, creates anxiety and mental chaos. It is not the act of achieving that brings fulfillment, but an enjoyment of the pursuit. The pursuit must be the thing that fulfills you.

John Wooden believed that success is the peace of mind that comes from knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming. His *Pyramid of Success* identified the values great leaders employ, each level building upon the other to create a feeling of comfort and accomplishment.

- Industriousness, friendship, loyalty, cooperation, enthusiasm
- Self-control, alertness, initiative, intentness
- Condition, skill, team spirit
- Poise, confidence
- Competitive greatness
- Faith and patience

No single accomplishment will fulfill you. If it did, you would become like a ripened fruit on the vine left too long. You must savor it and let go, believing that the fruit will grow again and again. If you build your



life with all of the values in Wooden's pyramid and remain focused on the process of becoming, rather than on the destination of achieving, life will be bountiful.

Easy Does It

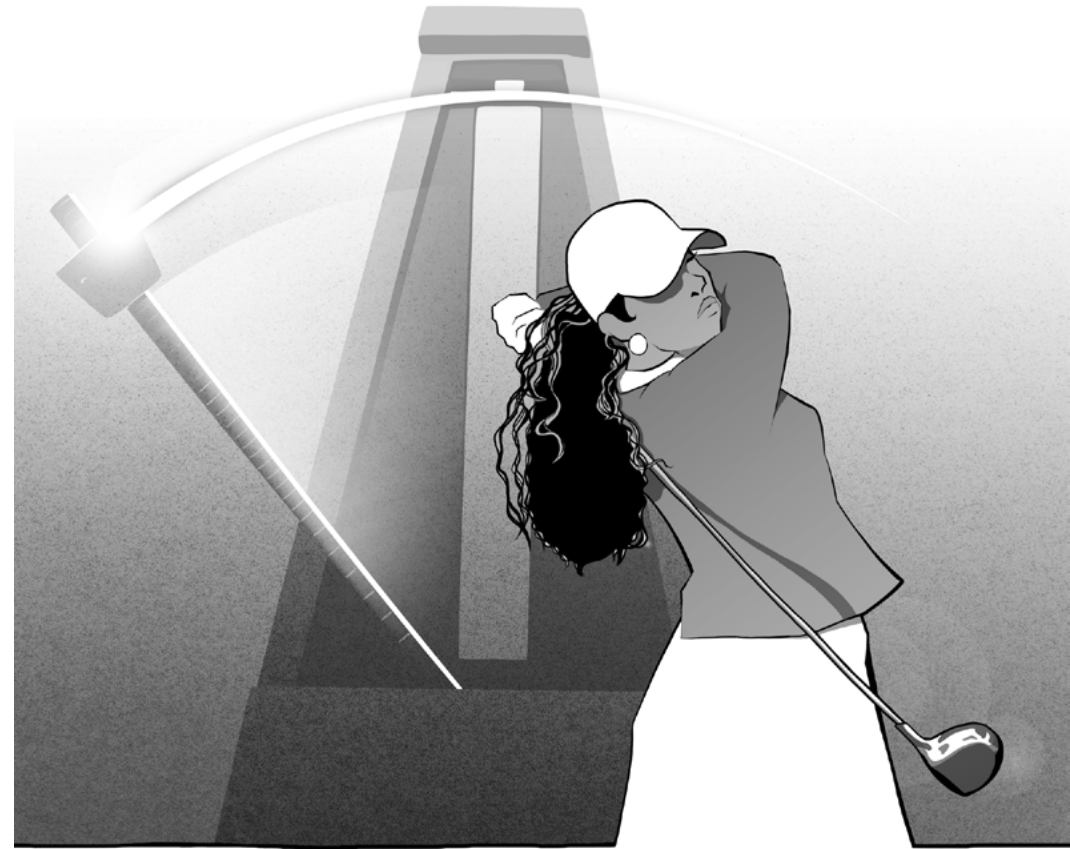
“Make the hard ones look easy and the easy ones look hard.”

– Walter Hagen

One of my first jobs out of college was as the personal assistant to a successful tax attorney in Los Angeles. He had graduated from Georgetown Law, practiced at the most prestigious tax law firm in the country, and was building his own practice. One of the secrets he taught stayed with me. When he was younger, he attended a very competitive high school in Beverly Hills, where all the students seemed to earn A's, captain the football team, and get the beautiful girls. He shared with me that he would stay up all hours of the night studying, practicing, and scheming to accomplish all the things he wanted to accomplish (and that most of his peers did the same thing). What he did differently was to pretend that he hadn't prepared at all. He would show up late to class, disheveled, saying he overslept and hadn't had the chance to study for an exam for which he would eventually set the curve. He made every effort to be seen doing absolutely nothing (and then return home to practice and study). The effect was quite powerful. Everyone around him became discouraged. Here he was acing exams, making the team, and getting the girl without any effort! (at least from their perspectives). It made his competitors feel that they would never beat him because they were working round the clock and only keeping up. What if he actually applied himself? There'd be no stopping him.

I've seen this effect with athletes as well. It is easy to get discouraged when you see someone doing anything “effortlessly” that requires a lot of effort on your part. In reality, almost anything worthwhile requires a tremendous amount of skill, time, and dedication. Tiger Woods didn't become the best player in the world by chance. He worked harder than his competitors most of his life. He practiced more, trained in the gym more, studied the game more, and developed his mental toughness at a higher level and degree than other players. It is no accident that he is

the best player in the world. The moral of the story is three-fold: work harder than everyone else, never assume that you know someone else's work ethic, and if you can, make it look easy. It is a fantastic competitive advantage.



The 3 Ts

“In the midst of movement and chaos, keep stillness inside of you.”

– Deepak Chopra

The mind's tendency to wander before a shot requires a specific and repeatable physical and mental routine. As I discussed earlier, the mind is capable of holding only a few thoughts in the conscious portion of the mind at any one time. The tendency toward a monkey mind that flips through thoughts, images, and outcomes randomly can be combated by a stable and repeatable pre-shot routine that encompasses the same mental preparation before each shot.

While many players carry swing thoughts to the course (swing plane, arm angle, take-away, et cetera), most of the best players I have known perform best with swing thoughts that are more directed toward the target, timing, and tempo. These three "Ts" should be the foundation for your thoughts over the ball. Target, by far the most important of the three, should be a specific picture in your mind of the ball's direction and trajectory as it falls toward a tiny mark. Tempo is the rhythm of the swing, the beats per minute that the arms and clubs follow through backward and forward motions. Timing is the sequence of actions that occur in the body to deliver the club to the ball. Tempo and timing work hand-in-hand. If tempo increases, timing is disrupted. When I was in college, I would spend hours swinging the club while listening to a metronome honing the rhythm of the swing. Timing became ingrained through repetition, and as long as I swung with the correct tempo, the body followed closely to the swings I had practiced before the shot.

Replace complicated swing thoughts with target, timing, and tempo. By repeating this sequence of thoughts you are more likely to create a calm space in your mind before initiating the swing. Many players feel that their thoughts actually pour out of their head, creating a calm or void as they effortlessly swing. This pouring out of the mind is an important and rarely performed act, often replaced by jumbled fears, anxiety, and uncertainty as we attempt to execute a shot. Hone and repeat these specific thoughts; take a deep breath and exhale before each shot; and allow the poring out of the mind to trigger the movements that initiate the backswing.

The Eyes of a Champion

"Winning isn't everything, but wanting it is."

– Arnold Palmer

"Conversion is not implanting eyes, for they exist already; but giving them a right direction, which they have not."

– Plato

One of the greatest differences between professional golfers and amateur golfers is the speed with which the amateur's head snaps up after striking the ball. Ideally, a putt is performed in the following sequence: multiple looks at the hole to develop feel and visualization, a practice stroke with the eyes cast downward, a practice stroke with the eyes fixed at the target, eyes back at the ball confirming alignment, one last look at the target visualizing the ball rolling into the hole, and an execution of the putt. The head and gaze stay downward until the ball reaches the hole. Amateurs spend far too much time staring at the ball or clubface and their heads and eyes snap up or peak before the ball has left the putter face. Similarly, on full shots, the eyes should be focused and exhibit relaxed concentration or mindfulness.

Recent research on happiness find that we are poor predictors of what makes us happy, and that we are also poor predictors of our possibilities because of the constraints we place on ourselves by our limited and narrow views. Our eyes are the windows to our thoughts and feelings. They betray false confidence, signal to others when we are disingenuous, and reveal our lack of mental clarity. Great champions' eyes are clear, purposeful, intense, focused, and both introspective and aware. If you are confident and mindful, your eyes will assist you in achieving your vision. If you are unsure, your eyes will reveal you.

Never Complain

“Be as you wish to seem.”

– Socrates

I have a professional student known to rant. He once played on a tour in which he was at one point fined more than he had made on the course for bad language and behavior. That said, he is a world-class player who has won tournaments and can easily support his family on his earnings on the course. However, he is a famous complainer: speed and bumpiness greens, spike marks, rules officials, pace of play, pin positions, plying partners...you name it he's got a grudge or opinion. He could complain endlessly, and often did. However, it was easy as an outsider to see he was re-experiencing the same situations week after week after week. It reminds me of one of the most controversial interventions in psychotherapy, and one most of my students and clients abhor: if the same problem keeps happening across people and situations, the problem is probably what they all have in common....you. Complaints reinforce patterns and limit insight.

I have made a commitment: never complain again. Complaints are shallowly buried unresolved desires. We would like different situations and outcomes, but express that desire as a challenge to the ‘rightness’ of what is or has occurred. For me, complaining felt good. It allowed me to vent frustrations about people or situations that caused me pain or to be upset. When I finished complaining, I felt better. However, I rarely fixed the problems and I would repeatedly revisit my situations, pain, and upset.

The truth, from someone who worked for years with people telling me their problems, is that complaints resolve the tension but fail to solve the problem. Complaining spends the mental energy we could spend on resolving or situations or the way we view them. Complaining is deeply satisfying and effective remedy for most, but it draws our energy and attention away from the thoughts and behaviors that are necessary for long-term growth change.

Get a Sponsor

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.”

– Albert Einstein

Research on behavior modification has shown that working in groups or pairs is extremely helpful in altering outdated or unproductive behaviors. While coaches and teachers can assist you in monitoring your progress weekly, monthly, or even less frequently, a sponsor can help monitor your progress daily. A sponsor is a person that has the types of experiences and outcomes you wish to achieve. They can assist you by practicing and playing with you to monitor whether you are following your practice routines and plans without having to be the technical authority on your swing. A sponsor can be older or younger, but should be someone who you trust to give you critical feedback. Forming new habits is difficult, and motivation often requires both positive and negative feedback. Choose someone with whom you don't have a friendship that could be challenged by having your feet held to the fire for not delivering on the promises you make to yourself. Give the sponsor your practice plan and check in with them daily. If you find that you are slipping back into old habits, be honest with yourself and seek assistance to get back on track. The worst mistake players can make is to begin to make positive changes without the proper habits and support necessary to sustain them. This will inevitably lead to performance that is not much different from the performance that old habits produced, a frustrating experience to everyone involved in your performance project.

Make A List

Make a list of 50 things you can do to improve. Take a week to make the list, asking for help from better players and coaches. Keep the list prominently displayed at your home or work to remind you of the things that you have done, and have yet to do.

The key is to not feel remorse for what you are not doing, but to constantly remind yourself of your progress toward your goals, and the additional improvements possible to your practice and preparation.

Three Balls Or Less

“Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.”

– Albert Einstein

“Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple.”

– Dr. Seuss

A few years ago, a student of mine wanted a 5-minute lesson before going out onto the course. Conventional wisdom has always held that bad rounds follow lessons, and this logic has stuck with me since I began teaching. I asked the student if we could reschedule, explaining that I didn't want to give him swing thoughts before he went on the course. He smiled and explained that it was unlikely, given the way I teach. “Three balls or less,” he said. “You always fix me in three balls or less. The rest of the lesson is overkill and repetition.” I smiled, knowing that there was some truth to what he said. I've struggled with the notion of teaching since doing it on a more full time basis as a Head Golf Professional at a public facility. I see instructors struggling on the range with students for sixty minutes at a time, giving them multiple fixes for swing plane, grip, stance, posture, and so on. A few years ago, after a particularly difficult and unsuccessful lesson, I hit the books and studied what the experts say about the timing of lessons and what students should expect. From all of my research and experience, I believe the following about lessons:

A good golf professional should be able to see your swing, understand its tendencies quickly, and develop a simple roadmap to improvement that can be quickly conveyed in a way that can be heard and understood. A good golf professional should be able to fix more than one problem at a time without instructions that confuse the student. This is accomplished by understanding a swing's tendency and working from the foundation of the problem, rather than merely working toward reduction of symptoms.



Improvement should be immediate if the student can repeat the professional's instructions. If the student does not improve, it is the instructor who is at fault.

I never charge a student who doesn't improve. If a student cannot perform better than when the lesson begins, it is irrelevant whether their posture, grip, or swing plane have improved. There should be immediate improvement. If not, I have done a poor job of instructing.

I don't go to sleep at night thinking about my successes. I go to sleep at night wondering how to fix a problem I haven't yet been able to solve. A good instructor knows his place as a partner in the learning process. When a student doesn't get better immediately, the instruction should be changed to accommodate the student's learning style and physical ability.

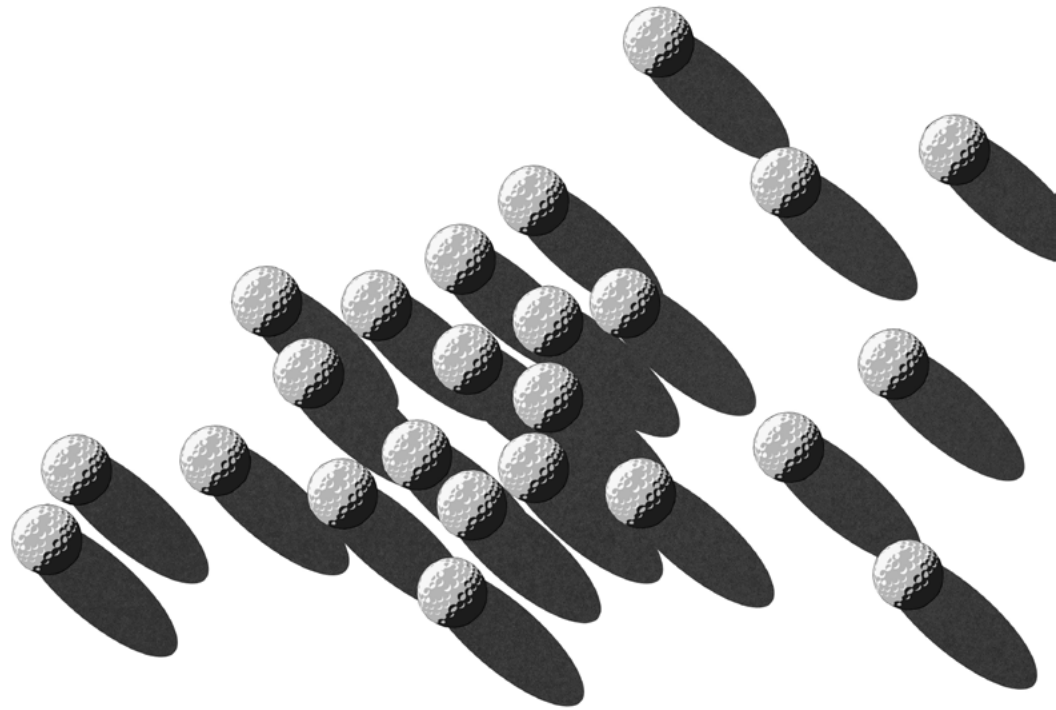
Lessons should focus only upon one or two swing issues and one or two setup issues. More than that will confuse a student.

CONCLUSION

In life, we all want to be better, but the uncertainty about success and workload make the status quo a comfortable alternative. There are few guarantees of improvement in life or golf and the fear of disappointment over non-improvement is an important obstacle to acknowledge. With a roadmap, personal guide, and guarantee, we would attempt any journey. Unfortunately, there are few roadmaps, fewer competent guides, and virtually no guarantees. Our certainties are change and uncertainty. Your comfort with risk, determined by your upbringing, experience, and personality, can offer an advantage or disadvantage depending upon your circumstances. However, without risk there is no growth. Risking failure is required for any venture, and I assume that you have at least some sense of the adventure and possibilities by reading these words. You are the author of your own story, which these words only attempt to influence. Your habits, which retell the story you tell about yourself, are the steel beams that support your achievements, and you must reconstruct the frame around your life to improve. Techniques can repair, but habits provide the foundation upon which greater successes can be built.



DRILLS



PUTTING

GOLF POOL

Create a “table” around one or several holes on a putting green using kite string laid on the ground in a rectangle. Spread an equal number of white and colored balls out in the space. One team or player tries to make all the white balls, the other team or player tries to make the colored balls. Players alternate turns putting their balls toward the holes on the table. If they make a ball, they get to go again. The first team or player to make all of his or her balls win. Players may play defense and use their shot to knock another player’s balls farther from the hole, but if the player knocks it outside of the square, it is like making the ball for the other player. With kids, you can also have them chip their balls into the rectangular area you’ve created with the string before closing a session.

LAST MAN STANDING

With a group of four or more, line up to putt at a kite string stretched out about 20 ft away on the putting green. Everyone starts from the same distance and putts at the same time. The person whose ball finishes farthest from the string is out. This process is continued until the last person is left standing.

SWITCH!

Create a circle around a hole with tees and have players spread out around the circle. Each player putts from one of the tees each time. Ready, set, go and everyone putts to the same hole. If a player makes a putt, they pick up the tee, put it in their pocket, and go to the next tee. As the referee, I yell “Switch!” and everyone must move to the next tee (clockwise). The first person to make (remember, they’re putting simultaneously) gets a point. The first person to 10, or the person who makes the most putts in 3 minutes, wins.

“NAME THAT TUNE”

...except it's "Make that Putt." Stations are set up with points in increasing difficulty/length. People bid on the difficulty of the putt, and the next person in line can bid on a more difficult putt, or say "make that putt," forcing the last bidder to make the putt from the station they bid on. If they miss, the person that challenged them to make the putt gets the points. If the person makes the putt, they get the points.

WAR

Choose two holes between 10 and 30 feet apart. Stand beside one hole while your opponent stands next to the other. Face one another and try to putt the ball into your opponent's hole. Use a predetermined odd number of balls. I like to use five so that the first person to hit three putts wins. The balls will be going back and forth so speed isn't necessarily an advantage. Change holes often to give each person the opportunity to hit both uphill and downhill putts.

PUTTING RELAY

If you have four or more players, this is an excellent game to promote fun and reacting putts (rather than standing over putts while paralysis sets in). Divide your group into even teams. Put two tees in the ground to designate the origin point for both teams toward the same hole. Place the tees so that both teams have the same length putt. Each team is given one ball and each member has to make the putt, retrieve the ball, and pass it to the next player. Running is an automatic start over penalty and each player putts until he or she has made the putt. The team whose members all make the putt wins.

AROUND THE WORLD

Place ten tees in the ground equidistant from one another in a 5-foot circle around a cup. Duplicate the same setup at a nearby hole and divide a group of four or more players into equal groups. Each team's members alternate shots from the same tee until one person makes the putt. When a putt is made from a tee, the tee is picked up and the team moves to the next tee. The teams compete at the same time and the first team to make a putt from every tee wins.

GOLF BOWLING

Using ten tees turned upside down, create a triangle similar to the ones at a bowling alley (with one tee in the front, two in the next row, three in the next row, and four in the final row). The tees should be lined up two inches apart. Each player gets two attempts to knock down as many pins as possible each turn. Place a string two feet behind the tees representing the gutter or "no fly zone." If the ball goes past the string, the attempt is a fault and no points are awarded. The gutter forces each player to concentrate both on speed and line. Score the game like bowling with ten frames, strikes, and spares or simply count the number of pins each turn.

BACK AND THROUGH

Many players putt with a backstroke or forward stroke that is too long or too short. Place a ball marker behind the putter and two tees in front of the ball spaced three inches apart. Place the ball equidistant from the tees and marker. Force yourself to putt between the ballmarker and the two tees (between which the ball will roll). Obviously, the distance that the objects are from one another will change as the length of the putt varies, but by creating a stroke that is equally long going back as forward, it is more likely to create a stroke that is gathering speed through impact (and creating a roll that will hold the putt's line toward the hole).



SHORT GAME

LONG, SHORT, PERFECT

Place a tee or marker on the green between you and the hole representing where you would like a pitch or chip to land on its way to the hole. Without looking tell a coach or fellow player whether you were short, long, or even with the marker. The coach or fellow player will give feedback as to whether the player was actually short, long, or even after the ball has stopped. This game assists in keeping the head low and learning the relationship between feel and distance.

INCREMENTS

This drill requires a length of grass between 50 and 100 yards. Place balls in a series of piles 5 yards apart in a straight line, extended as far as possible within the 50 to 100 yards. Move from pile to pile, using your wedge to play balls from one pile to the next. Each shot should be to a pile at least 10 yards apart. The drill develops feel and hitting to targets in 10 yard increments.

DRAW BACK

Putt to a hole more than 20 feet away. If you miss the first putt, draw the ball back the length of your putter, approximately 3 feet, from where the ball stopped. Try to make the lengthened comebacker. This drill assists you with speed control as well as making “critical length” putts inside four feet.

DOUBLE DRAW BACK

This is essentially the same drill as Draw Back, except that you draw the ball back two putter lengths, approximately six feet, after the initial putt and try to make the much lengthened comebacker.

HOLE OUT

Measure your progress by makes, not misses. Before a short game practice session, commit to making a certain number of chips or pitches before leaving the practice area. Start with 2 or 3 and increase the number by one each subsequent practice session.

SURROUND A HOLE

Scatter between 10 and 20 balls three feet around a hole. Work your way around the circle, making each putt. If you miss a putt, replace the balls and begin again. Don't leave the practice green until you can make the putts from all sides of a hole. This drill is especially useful if you putt to a hole with break. It forces you to learn the difference in speeds and alignment required to hit left-to-right and right-to-left putts (hint: they're not the same).

NEVER TAKE A PUTT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE

Missing putts breed indecision and uncertainty, both of which create tentative or overly aggressive putting strokes. In practice, train your brain to make every putt by putting to the hole only when inside five feet. For most players, this is a difficult transition to make in practice, but if you begin to putt to the hole only from one foot, and slowly work your way out on subsequent practice sessions, you will master the short putts quickly, and have greater confidence on the green no matter how long the putt.

PUTT TO A TEE

Keeping in mind that you should never putt to a hole unless you can guarantee you'll make the putt, on putts longer than five feet, putt to a tee. This assists you with focusing on the smallest possible target, and reminds you that you must get the ball past the target.

PUTT TO THE FAR FRINGE

This drill is similar to lagging in billiards, and is the first putting drill I use in my pre-game warm-up. Using one ball, putt from any spot on the green to the edge of the fringe at least 20 feet away. Putt across the green, from fringe to fringe, until you have mastered the speed and general contouring of the green. If you practice this drill before every round, you'll rarely have problem reading the speed of greens on the course.

FROM THE FRINGE

Start with three balls on the fringe of a practice green. Using your preferred chipping club, chip all of the balls toward a specific hole (remember to try to make each shot). For the balls you don't chip in, try to make the putts with the club you chipped with. Your goal is to take no more than five strokes (three chips and hopefully only two putts). Repeat the drill using a variety of clubs. This drill will reinforce the importance of speed and alignment on chipping.

FROM WAY DOWNTOWN

Set out three trashcans or laundry baskets 15, 20, and 30 yards out. Work on distance control by "making baskets" with your sand and lob wedges.

WIND THE CLOCK

Imagining that your left arm is the minute hand on a clock, hit pitches, progressively farther from one another, imagining that you are swinging the club from 5:00 to 7:00, 4:30 to 7:30, 4:00 to 8:00 and so on. Once you have reached 2:30 to 9:30, begin to work your way back, dropping balls inside the ones you previously hit.

PUTT TO THE APEX

On a putt that breaks at least six inches in one direction, place a tee at the apex of the break. Learn to putt toward that tee or apex with a smooth confident stroke. This reduces being tentative or overly aggressive, imparting improper spin on the ball. Remember, "Every putt is a straight putt" (Bobby Locke).

MAKE A BALL STOP

Work on controlling how far a ball will roll or skip after it lands by adjusting the face of the club. Don't try to spin the ball or help it in any way. Work on contact and trajectory. Spin is a byproduct of these two variables.

THREE BALLS INSIDE 100

Begin working on your distance control on the "money shots" (those between 20 and 60 yards) by tossing three balls at distances between 20 and 60 yards using an underhanded motion. As you perform this drill, pay attention to your eyes. In most sports, we throw the ball while we face the target, visualizing the ball's path toward the target. Using your eyes is critical and tossing the ball forces you to visualize the ball's trajectory and direction. After you're comfortable tossing balls at the hole, practice pitch shots with your wedges, taking the same amount of backswing with your arms that you used when tossing underhanded.

THE STRING

Tie a pencil at each end of a five-foot long piece of string. Put one pencil into the green on the far side of the cup and place the other pencil in the ground on the near side, stretching the string tightly, so that it hovers over the ground like a tightrope. The hole should be between the pencils, and close to one end of the string. Practice putting from the other end of the string with the club face remaining square under the string for the entire stroke. Repeat the drill until you can consistently make 10 putts in a row. Use increasing lengths of string to build confidence on longer putts.

ALADDIN'S CARPET

Draw a rectangular box in the sand trap about six inches long toward the target and four inches across. Place a ball in the middle of the box. When Aladdin rode on his carpet, the entire carpet rose at once. Bunker play is no different. Think of making the carpet fly to the green in one piece. If the carpet goes to the target, Aladdin will go to the target. Forget the ball. Focus on the carpet.

HOOT SCOOT

Scatter a bucket of balls around a green and take turns with a partner, seeing how many balls you both can get up and in within two strokes. Alternate choosing the ball and playing in, but keep a running total of who makes more and who gets up and down more often.

THE INNER CIRCLE

Create three concentric circles around a hole with kite string or chalk (like a bull's eye with the closest circle being the smallest). With either putts or chips, score your ability to place the balls close to the hole. Award 3 points for hitting the ball into the bull's eye, 2 points for the middle area, and 1 point for the outside area.

THE OBSTACLE COURSE

FULL SHOT

TOWER OF POWER

Stack 6 large baskets into a pyramid. The kids line up into teams. Set up two stations with a pile of balls in each. Say "go" and the kids hit balls towards the pyramid as fast as they can. The first player to knock down the tower wins and gets a point for his team.

GOLF HOCKEY

Make a goal with two bag stands and a piece of wood or a shaft for the goal post. We put a milk crate in the middle of the goal with a helmet on it to look like a goalie. The kids get 3 shots each and get points for making it through the goal.

CALL YOUR SHOT

Place a shaft in the ground about 10 yards in front of your teeing position and between you and a target. Take turns with an opponent calling whether you will play the shot to the right of left of the shaft and draw or fade the ball toward the target. You can move the shaft to the left or right to create more challenging shots, practicing as though you are recovering from around obstacles.

LINE EM UP

This is another drill that can be used both in short game a full shots that focuses upon carry and distance control. The object of the game is to hit as many balls as possible in a designated area, each of which finishing past the previous ball. The setup for this game is quite simple. Designate an area over which you must hit your first shot and a terminal line past which you are not allowed to hit (these imaginary lines should be approximately 40 yards in front of you and then no farther than the maximum distance you can hit the club you are working with). If your

shot goes short of either the carry line or the previous ball, you must start over. If the ball goes past the terminal line, you must start over. See how many shots you can hit in a row hitting just past the previous ball and short of the terminal line. Work at this drill with all of your clubs to develop touch and feel.

WORST BALL

Of all the drills I use with students, this is my favorite. It can be played from any distance, but requires a tremendous amount of mental focus. Place two balls on the tee or putting green and play both shots toward the hole. Play your next shots from the worst of the two finishing positions of the first balls. Continue to take two shots from the worst of the finishing positions until both balls are holed. If one of the balls is holed, but the other misses, you must remove the ball from the hole and play from the position of the ball that did not go in the hole.

TECHNIQUE DRILLS

While teachers differ about technique, the following are some of the basic drills that I use with most students to develop rudimentary skills.

FULL SWING

PASS THE BALL INTO THE BUCKET

This drill is designed to teach the student proper tempo and take-away of the club. Place a ball 8 inches behind the ball you are going to hit (directly down your target line or fractions of an inch closer toward you, inside your target line). Place a bucket two feet behind the back ball and force yourself to tap the back ball into the bucket as you take the club away. If the ball doesn't make it to the bucket or hits the bucket with a crash, the takeaway is too quick. If the ball misses the bucket, the takeaway is either too inside or outside.

BACK WITH THE LEFT, SWING THROUGH WITH THE LEFT

I spend a great deal of time talking about the importance of the left side of the body. Most people exert too much energy with their right side (which is supposed to be passive throughout the swing). To encourage more left side, I have students take the club away with only their left hand, catch the club at the top in the middle of the shaft with the open palm of their right hand (just let it sit on your palm, don't grip it), and to swing through with just their left hand to finish. This drill helps to feel the big muscles of the left side, and will almost surely cure fat shots if the club is gathering speed through to finish.

TAKE THE RIGHT HAND OFF THE CLUB AT IMPACT

Another drill to increase the use of the left side (and limit the throwing of the club with the right hand) is to take the right hand off the club at impact, allowing the club to swing to the top at finish. Players that throw the club almost always do it with their right hand, and wind up with a finish that is abbreviated and close to their body. Practice this at home and while hitting golf balls to feel the club releasing and finishing properly.

RIGHT FOOT OFF THE GROUND AT FINISH

Balance is one of the areas over which I differ most from other teachers. I believe balance and core strength must be built through drills that challenge a player's sense of balance. One of the basic drills I use is to have a student actually take their right foot off the ground as the ball leaves the club. If a player has correctly swung the club around their body (rather than throwing it), this drill isn't terribly difficult. However, if there is excessive swaying or throwing, keeping your balance is almost impossible.

RIGHT HANDED SWING FOR TEMPO AND FEEL

I learned this drill from an excellent instructor about two years ago. Swing the club with just your right hand to develop softer arms and tempo. Make sure the right arm folds as the club goes away and extends through the shot. Practice hitting balls with just your right hand to develop the grip pressure, tempo, and club rotation required in your full swing.

TWO BALLS - HIT THE MIDDLE ONE

This is a very old and simple drill that I regularly use with students whose ball starts right or left of their chosen target. Place three balls in a row about two inches apart. Hit the middle ball, forcing you club to pass between the inside and outside ball. Start with small shots and build your swing as you increase in confidence.

PARALLEL SHAFTS

Swing two clubs with one in each hand, keeping the shafts parallel throughout the entire swing. This drill will develop a feel for where the hands belong throughout the swing to keep the club on its proper plane. Many players overswing with their right hand, causing a flipping or stabbing motion at the ball. This drill forces the hands to move in unison throughout the swing.

SHORT GAME

CHIP AND PUTT LEFT HANDED

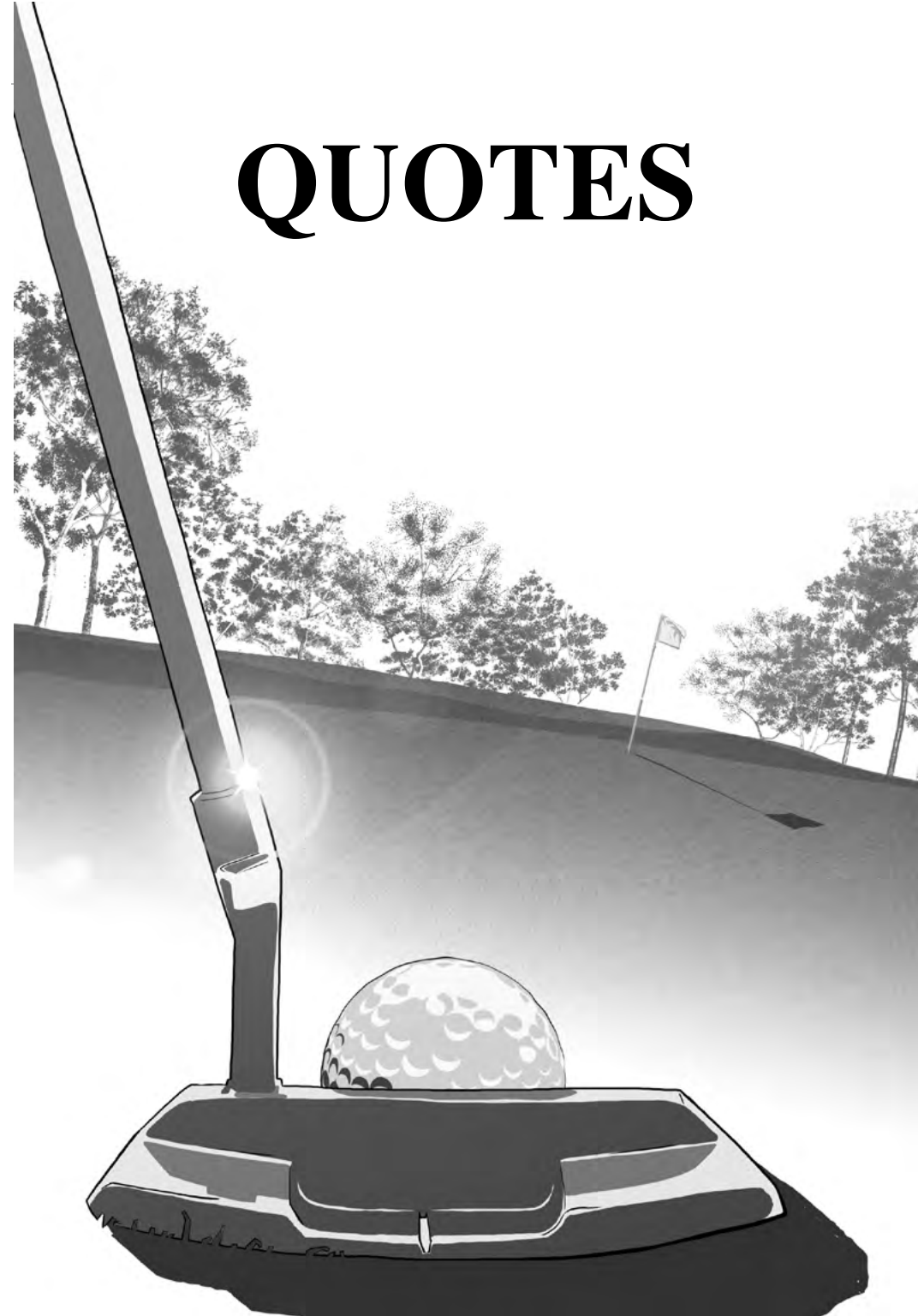
As in the full swing, the right hand has a tendency to overtake the left. For chips and putts, this results in an increased loft of the club and fat shots. Chipping left-handed promotes a downward strike to the ball with a flat wrist, producing a low shot that runs toward the hole.

PITCH RIGHT HANDED

Learning to control the trajectory of pitch shots requires understanding the way in which loft is created (largely by ball position and release of the club with the right hand). Practice pitching the ball with the right hand. Release the club more before and throughout impact to create height in the shot. Hold the release to create a lower trajectory. This is a slightly more advanced drill. Be careful not to pick at the ball. Continue to hit down and through the shot working your way toward releasing the club before impact while allowing the club to gather speed. This is a great way to learn the most difficult (and hopefully least used) shot: the flop shot.



QUOTES



“It is every man’s obligation to give back.”

– Albert Einstein

“I know quite certainly that I myself have no special talent; curiosity, obsession and dogged endurance, combined with self-criticism, have brought me to my ideas.”

– Albert Einstein

“The absence of memory is freedom.”

– Dr. Mac Powell

“You’ve got to see it to achieve it.”

– Dr. Mac Powell

“As you walk down the fairway of life you must smell the roses, for you only get to play one round.”

– Ben Hogan

“Golf is not a game of good shots. It’s a game of bad shots.”

– Ben Hogan

“I learn something new about the game almost every time I step on the course.”

– Ben Hogan

“I play golf with friends sometimes, but there are never friendly games.”

– Ben Hogan

“If we could have just screwed another head on his shoulders, he would have been the greatest golfer who ever lived.”

– Ben Hogan

“Relax? How can anybody relax and play golf? You have to grip the club, don’t you?”

– Ben Hogan

“If you want to improve your putting, hit the ball closer to the hole.”

– Ben Hogan

“Reverse every natural instinct and do the opposite of what you are inclined to do, and you will probably come very close to having a perfect golf swing.”

– Ben Hogan

“There is no similarity between golf and putting; they are two different games, one played in the air, and the other on the ground.”

– Ben Hogan

“As a kid, I might have been psycho, I guess, but I used to throw golf balls in the trees and try and somehow make par from them. I thought that was fun.”

– Tiger Woods

“I love to play golf, and that’s my arena. And you can characterize it and describe it however you want, but I have a love and a passion for getting that ball in the hole and beating those guys.”

– Tiger Woods

“I’m addicted. I’m addicted to golf.”

– Tiger Woods

“I’m trying as hard as I can, and sometimes things don’t go your way, and that’s the way things go.”

– Tiger Woods

“If you are given a chance to be a role model, I think you should always take it because you can influence a person’s life in a positive light, and that’s what I want to do. That’s what it’s all about.”

– Tiger Woods

“One of the things that my parents have taught me is never listen to other people’s expectations.”

– Tiger Woods

“You can always become better.”

– Tiger Woods

“You should live your own life and live up to your own expectations, and those are the only things I really care about it.”

– Tiger Woods

“So many moving parts. Your whole body’s moving, and this ball is not moving. It’s standing still, laughing at you.”

– Tiger Woods

“Every shot makes someone happy.”

– Fuzzy Zoeller

“Nothing can substitute for just plain hard work. I had to put in the time to get back. And it was a grind. It meant training and sweating every day. But I was completely committed to working out to prove to myself that I still could do it.”

– Andre Agassi

“Being number two sucks.”

– Andre Agassi

“I question myself every day. That’s what I still find motivating about this. I don’t have the answers, I don’t pretend that I do just because I won the match. Just keep fighting and maybe something good happens.”

– Andre Agassi

“If you don’t practice you don’t deserve to win.”

– Andre Agassi

“I think you learn better when things are done the hard way.”

– John Elway

“You learn a lot more from the lows because it makes you pay attention to what you’re doing.”

– John Elway

“They call it golf because all the other four letter words were taken.”

– Raymond Floyd

“The ballplayer who loses his head, who can’t keep his cool, is worse than no ballplayer at all.”

– Lou Gehrig

“You need horsepower everywhere. The more you have the better the car works. But you’ve got to have reliability as well.”

– Jeff Gordon

“At the end of the day you got to stand over it and hit a certain shape ball or that’s it.”

– Retief Goosen

“But there’s a little margin, I think, you know, that it’s just that little edge inside that you know that you can beat them.”

– Retief Goosen

“But when you’re on a course... You want to think where you want to hit it and not really where you don’t want to hit it.”

– Retief Goosen

“I’m comfortable with being precise.”

– Bernhard Langer

“I’m extremely competitive and hate to lose but I’ve matured and reached a point in life -where I can see the bigger picture.”

– Bernhard Langer

“You can’t cover people with perceptions because we are all different.”

– Bernhard Langer

“I can’t change history, I don’t want to change history. I can only change the future. I’m working on that.”

– Boris Becker

“Tennis is a psychological sport, you have to keep a clear head. That is why I stopped playing.”

– Boris Becker

“A good hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be.”

– Wayne Gretzky

“I don’t like my hockey sticks touching other sticks, and I don’t like them crossing one another, and I kind of have them hidden in the corner. I put baby powder on the ends. I think it’s essentially a matter of taking care of what takes care of you.”

– Wayne Gretzky

“The only way a kid is going to practice is if it’s total fun for him... and it was for me.”

– Wayne Gretzky

“Don’t hurry. Don’t worry. You’re only here for a short visit. So don’t forget to stop and smell the roses.”

– Walter Hagen

“No one remembers who came in second.”

– Walter Hagen

“There is no tragedy in missing a putt, no matter how short. All have erred in this respect.”

– Walter Hagen

“Over the years, I’ve had hundreds of shots blocked. You’ve got to go in and take chances.”

– John Havlicek

“There is nothing wrong with dedication and goals, but if you focus on yourself, all the lights fade away and you become a fleeting moment in life.”

– Pete Maravich

“I think it’s the mark of a great player to be confident in tough situations.”

– John McEnroe

“I think you have to put pressure on your opponents right away. Once he gets into his groove on the baseline, you can forget it.”

– John McEnroe

“He’s a threat to win until his brain turns to tapioca.”

– Gary McCord

“One way to break up any kind of tension is good deep breathing.”

– Byron Nelson

“Always make a total effort, even when the odds are against you.”

– Arnold Palmer

“I have a tip that can take 5 strokes off anyone’s golf game. It’s called an eraser.”

– Arnold Palmer

“Putting is like wisdom – partly a natural gift and partly the accumulation of experience.”

– Arnold Palmer

“The most rewarding things you do in life are often the ones that look like they cannot be done.”

– Arnold Palmer

“What do I mean by concentration? I mean focusing totally on the business at hand and commanding your body to do exactly what you want it to do.”

– Arnold Palmer

“People only see what they are prepared to see.”

– Ralf Waldo Emerson

“Excellence is the unlimited ability to improve the quality of what you have to offer.”

– Rick Pitino

“Failure is good. It’s fertilizer. Everything I’ve learned about coaching, I’ve learned from making mistakes.”

– Rick Pitino

“I just don’t deal with the negativity. I can’t get involved in that side of it. I don’t understand it, and you can’t let it take away from your life and what you are trying to do.”

– Rick Pitino

“To me it was never about what I accomplished on the football field, it was about the way I played the game.”

– Jerry Rice

“My father taught me that the only way you can make good at anything is to practice, and then practice some more.”

– Pete Rose

“Somebody’s gotta win and somebody’s gotta lose and I believe in letting the other guy lose.”

– Pete Rose

“Golf is a thinking man’s game. You can have all the shots in the bag, but if you don’t know what to do with them, you’ve got troubles.”

– Chi Chi Rodriguez

“I read the greens in Spanish, but putt in English.”

– Chi Chi Rodriguez

“No one has as much luck around the greens as one who practices a lot.”

– Chi Chi Rodriguez

“For one thing, when you’re playing as well as I was at the time, you think you can play with anything. That isn’t true, of course, but I didn’t know it then.”

– Payne Stewart

“I don’t think it’s healthy to take yourself too seriously.”

– Payne Stewart

“If somebody asks for my opinion, I tell them my opinion, whether it’s what they want to hear or not.”

– Payne Stewart

“You can think best when you’re happiest.”

– Peter Thomson

“Golf isn’t just my business, it’s my hobby.”

– Lee Trevino

“Putts get real difficult the day they hand out the money.”

– Lee Trevino

“There is no such thing as a natural touch. Touch is something you create by hitting millions of golf balls.”

– Lee Trevino

“Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others.”

– Jonathan Swift

“More matches are lost through carelessness at the beginning than any other cause.”

– Harry Vardon

“To play well you must feel tranquil and at peace. I have never been troubled by nerves in golf because I felt I had nothing to lose and everything to gain.”

– Harry Vardon

“I don’t believe you have to be better than everybody else. I believe you have to be better than you ever thought you could be.”

– Ken Venturi

“Victory is everything. You can spend the money but you can never spend the memories.”

– Ken Venturi

“In order to learn one must change one’s mind.”

– Orson Scott Card

“A man who views the world the same at fifty as he did at twenty has wasted thirty years of his life.”

– Muhammad Ali

“I hated every minute of training, but I said, ‘Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.’”

– Muhammad Ali

“I run on the road, long before I dance under the lights.”

– Muhammad Ali

“The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature.”

– Anne Frank

“If you are going to throw a club, it is important to throw it ahead of you, down the fairway, so you don’t have to waste energy going back to pick it up.”

– Tommy Bolt

“The control man has secured over nature has far outrun his control over himself.”

– Bobby Jones

“If you accept the expectations of others, especially negative ones, then you never will change the outcome.”

– Michael Jordan

“Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.”

– Michael Jordan

“You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.”

– Michael Jordan

“We could never learn to be brave and patient if there were only joy in the world.”

– Helen Keller

“Concentration is a fine antidote to anxiety.”

– Jack Nicklaus

“Focus on remedies, not faults.”

– Jack Nicklaus

“I’m a firm believer that in the theory that people only do their best at things they truly enjoy. It is difficult to excel at something you don’t enjoy.”

– Jack Nicklaus

“Resolve never to quit, never to give up, no matter what the situation.”

– Jack Nicklaus

“Through the years of experience I have found that air offers less resistance than dirt.”

– Jack Nicklaus

“What we learn only through the ears makes less impression upon our minds than what is presented to the trustworthy eye.”

– Horace

“Golf has probably kept more people sane than psychiatrists have.”

– Harvey Penick

“What we seek we shall find; what we flee from flees from us.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“People who always try to cut corners will never come close to realizing their full potential.”

– John Wooden

“Understand there is a price to be paid for achieving anything of significance. You must be willing to pay the price.”

– John Wooden

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

– Chinese Proverb

“If it’s hysterical, it’s historical.”

– Anonymous

“I may not be much, but I’m all I think about.”

– Anonymous

“Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is.”

– German Proverb

“You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.”

– Eleanor Roosevelt

“I am always doing that which I can not do, in order that I may learn how to do it.”

– Pablo Picasso

“If profanity had an influence on the flight of the ball, the game of golf would be played far better than it is.”

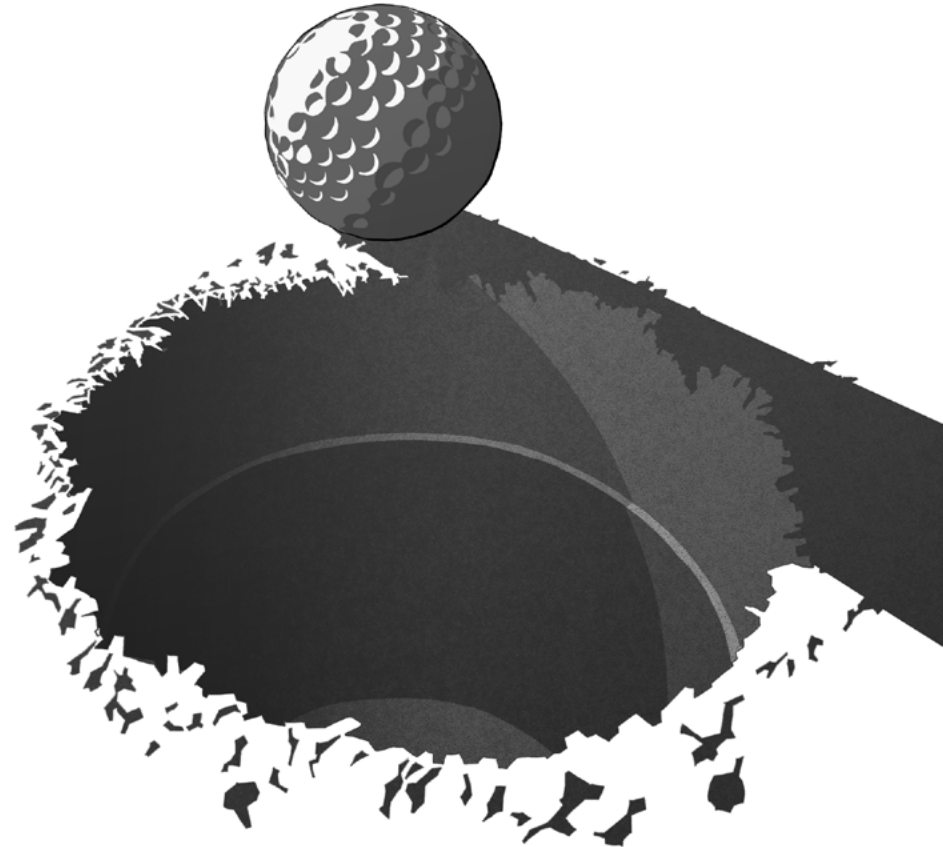
– Horace G. Hutchinson

“If a lot of people gripped a knife and fork the way they do a golf club, they’d starve to death.”

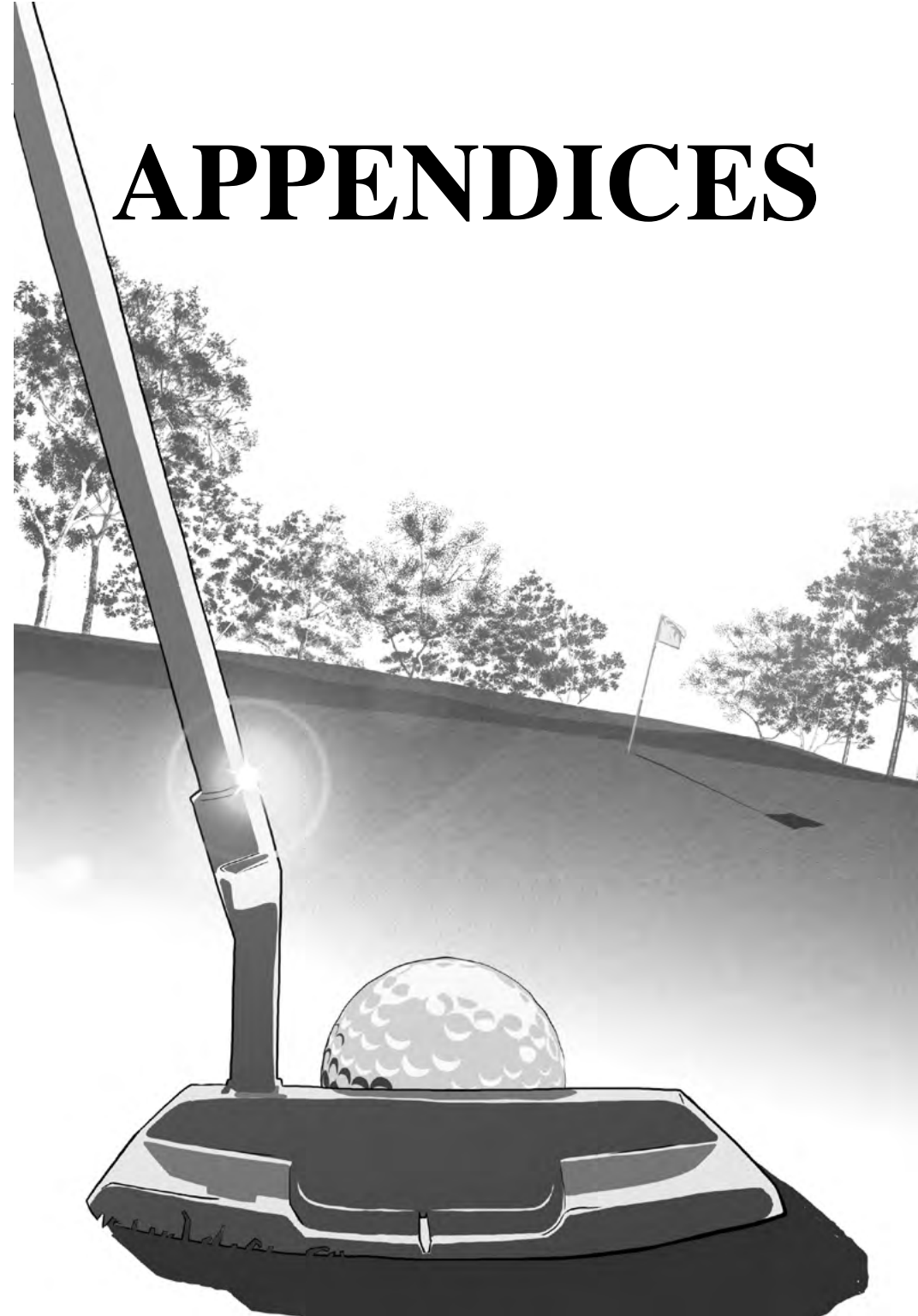
– Sam Snead

“The more I learn, the more I realize I don’t know.”

– Albert Einstein



APPENDICES



SKILLS EVALUATION

Short Putts

(10 putts made from four feet) _____ of 10

0 to 5 High Handicap Short Putter

6 to 7 Average Short Putter

8 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Short Putter

Long Putts

(10 putts from 35 within four feet) _____ of 10

0 to 6 High Handicap Long Putter

7 to 8 Average Long Putter

9 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Long Putter

Chipping

(10 chips w/9 feet of carry and 35 feet total within four feet) _____ of 10

0 to 4 High Handicap Chipper

5 to 7 Average Chipper

8 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Chipper

Bunker Play

(10 bunker shots from 35 feet within four feet) _____ of 10

0 to 3 High Handicap Bunker Player

4 to 6 Average Bunker Player

7 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Bunker Player

Pitching

(10 balls from 50 yards within 15 feet) _____ of 10

0 to 3 High Handicap Pitcher

4 to 6 Average Pitcher

7 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Pitcher

Short Irons (9 Iron to Lob Wedge)

(10 balls from 80 yards within 24 feet) _____ of 10

0 to 3 High Handicap Short Iron Player

4 to 6 Average Short Iron Player

7 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Short Iron Player

Mid Irons (5 Iron to 8 Iron)

(10 balls from 160 yards within 48 feet) _____ of 10

0 to 3 High Handicap Mid Iron Player

4 to 7 Average Mid Iron Player

8 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Mid Iron Player

Off the Tee with Driver

(10 balls from the tee into a 35 yard wide fairway) _____ of 10

0 to 2 High Handicap Driver

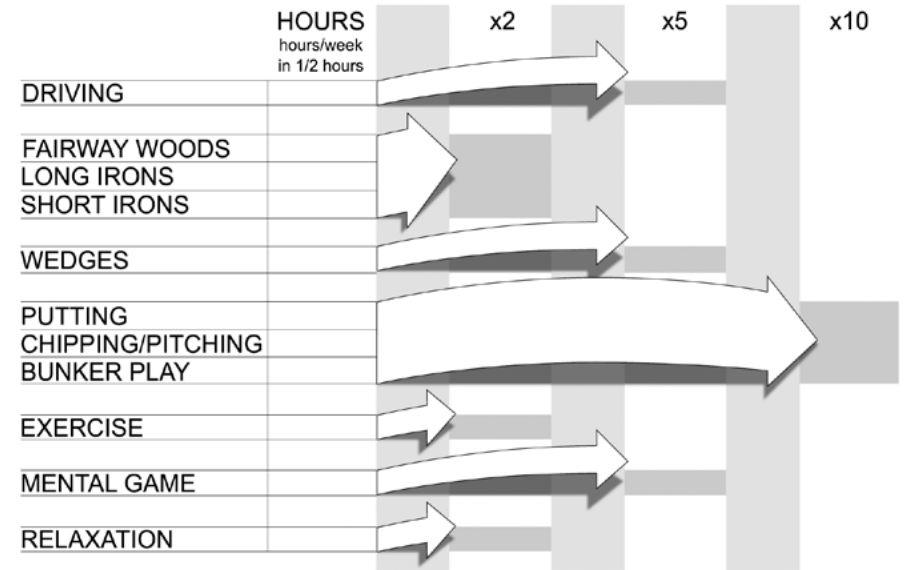
3 to 5 Average Driver

6 to 10 Single Digit Handicap Driver



	SESSION								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BALL STRIKING									
Alignment & Setup									
DRIVING									
Driver Distance									
Driver Accuracy									
APPROACH SHOTS									
Iron Distances									
Hybrid									
3-Iron									
4-Iron									
5-Iron									
6-Iron									
7-Iron									
8-Iron									
9-Iron									
Pitching Wedge									
Gap Wedge									
Lob Wedge									
FAIRWAY WOODS									
FW Distance									
FW Accuracy									
WORKING THE BALL									
Working Left									
Working Right									
PITCHING & CHIPPING									
Carry & Roll									
Makes									
BUNKER PLAY									
Getting Outs									
Sand Saves									
PUTTING									
Speed Control									
Cumulative Distance									
Inside 3-Foot									
Reading Greens									
Tightness of Roll									
MENTAL EDGE									

TOTAL SCORE



TOTALS:

100+	Professional
99 - 86	Single-Digit Handicapper
85 - 64	Mid-Handicapper
65 - below	High Handicapper



