

The 50 Secrets to Great Golf

You Don't Know About...

YET!

Nick Bradley

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This book is for, and because of, my mother, Brenda Bradley.

Introduction from Nick Bradley

At the time of writing, we have never been clearer regarding the physical realm of golf. We have Doppler Radars, 4D Body suits, an encyclopedic knowledge of biomechanics and every shaft-head combination your swing profile could ever need. Obtain the correct diagnosis and the answer will be given.

There is nothing left *in front* of the curtain.

I have witnessed incredible careers purged from talent challenged professionals. Equally, I have seen God-given ability sliced into pieces of confusion and failure through an inability to self-manage, self-strategize, and most importantly, cultivate personal philosophies and values that align with performance.

Not so long ago, the word “mystique” was reserved for the timing of your golf swing. The real mystique in the 21st century will be why, when everything is at your disposal, can you still falter and become desperately frustrated?

I have had significant success with players of all abilities. No question, technical challenges were put to bed or suppressed with most students (some faults are simply endemic), but the quantum jumps have always been made when destructive mental habits and routines have been replaced by effective and economic plans of action.

‘50 Secrets’ distills the complex questions and situations golf presents to us. I chose to write the book in an epistolary format, so it didn’t seem like I was writing at you but for you.

The precursor to a disastrous swing change. The precursor to an effective equipment switch. The precursor to an effective work out pattern. The precursor to a Major. The precursor to repeatably winning has been and always will be value-based thought.

‘50 Secrets’ WILL talk to you.

My best,
Nick Bradley

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Part One:
For Professionals and Amateurs

1. Personally Accounting for Your “Self”

My dear student:

We will explore energy creation and management a little later, but for now you should view your levels of golf production, interaction, creativity, performance, and relationships as a bank account. In a similar way to banking, there are three main activities for golf: deposits, withdrawals, and investments. Your level of functionality is directly related to the management of your account.

It is sometimes an arduous task for me to cajole student golfers into taking scheduled days off since, in that regard, I battle an unseen foe. I know you, and I can forego that process because of our transparent relationship but I warn you that your ego will have a severe issue with taking time off and being away from the game. Frankly, your ego will think it is a futile period of nothingness.

That attitude reminds me of the old story of two lumberjacks who entered a tree felling tournament. As they both set off and attempted to chop as many trees down as possible, it didn't take long for one of them to stop and walk back to the starting line. Continuing to chop away, the other lumberjack couldn't believe his luck when he saw his opponent had given up. That belief was short-lived as he glanced up only to see his opponent reappear, resume his chopping, and whizz past him to the finish line. Wiping the sweat from his brow, the losing lumberjack turned to his opponent and said, “I thought you had given up. Where did you go?”

The winner replied, “I took time out to sharpen my saw.”

So, like your cell phone, your effectiveness is only recognized when you are fully charged and operating in the two-way state of receive and send. The lumberjack story reflects the struggle

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between what I know you suspect to be essential and correct, yet you might have the reluctance to take action and benefit from it.

The deposits you'll make—your energy—as a golfer originate from an initial separation from the activity you ultimately want to invest in and what you want to withdraw from in this case, golf. It is no coincidence that the two greatest golfers who ever lived—Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods—also played the most limited schedules. So, paradoxically, to gain in that situation, you must let go. For twenty-five years, I have successfully shifted students from the stubborn belief that if they lose a day, it will take two days to reestablish their form. That is not for you, my apprentice. To come back hungry to the table, you must first leave it and with no sense of guilt.

Withdrawals from your personal energy account should be efficient and economical. Jon Wooden's quote about not mistaking "achievement for activity" is a perfect phrase I want you to keep in mind when engaging in any endeavor. Effective withdrawals distinguish between a busy fool and you, the astute professional and pupil. The busy fool never creates a hierarchy of actionable importance. Every practice session or mental training activity needs to have a desired outcome. Your energy is too precious to freely throw around.

Investments come under the heading of education and growth. Upon identifying the growth points yet to come in your armory, be it physical or mental, a period of research and reputation investigation should be done. Like any investment, the return should reflect the quality of information garnered beforehand and, in that regard, it's no different from the stock market. The best investments that lead to a cycle of growth are produced with the savviest and most reputable companies.

I want you to be rested. I want you to be energized. More than anything, I want you to be effective. You are not a never-ending well of golf activity so pace yourself and be smart about when and where you collect, then use your energy.

1. Personally Accounting for Your “Self”

Principles of a Balanced You

1. Deposit with plentiful rest and nutritious foods.
2. Withdraw from your energy efficiently. Be frugal.
3. Invest in yourself by seeking out proven mentors.

2. See, Feel, Do

My dear student:

Such is your knowledge that it wouldn't surprise me to learn you already know the common thread between individuals who display a constant progression and those who are effective golfers. They have all followed the human process of manifestation called See, Feel, Do which is your formula for genius but is also a golfing disaster.

Since our seeing and our imaginative capacity are the separating elements between us and the animal kingdom, they are naturally called upon anytime we need to elevate to new levels or solve problems. Visionaries create possibility before reality.

Next, we come to feel. As you know from our discussions, emotional intelligence is fast becoming recognized as an essential ingredient for success in any endeavor. It steadies you when you hit road bumps and encounter awkward personalities and, similarly, it will keep you grounded when you reach new heights and goals. Many times, I have echoed the sentiments of the experts who implored you to never make decisions when you're tired and emotional. That is still sound advice. To feel is also to rehearse the sensations you need for any given shot situation. If you can't feel it in rehearsal, it's unlikely you have either seen it or that you can physically perform it.

Last is to do or to execute. That is made a whole lot easier when see and feel have been accomplished. With the first two in place, a wave of inner trust will ensue and carry you through any self-doubt you may have if you are struggling to muster the courage to act. I call upon the pre-shot routine of Jack Nicklaus which was entirely about how many mental insurance policies he could install before the shot was played. Jack first went to the movies. He then felt the sensations needed to produce the

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picture, and he executed better than anyone in history. That simplicity is what I want for you.

So, where is the disaster and the challenge in this for you? By design or by fluke, it is so well proven that if a person follows the See, Feel, Do process, manifestation will occur. When you have achieved your success, the process needs to immediately reverse into Do, Feel, See. Initially, you will be impassioned with emotion at your great accomplishment (feel) but, ideally, after this wave of euphoria, you should stop, revisit or revise, and debrief. Revealed below is the number one reason why you cannot repeat success.

I want to be clear with you at this juncture. Disaster occurs when the reversed Do, Feel, See just becomes Feel, Do. Because of the feeling of euphoria when you cross the finish line of achievement, you will understandably want to revisit that point again and feel the same rush. Who wouldn't? Now, you enter a cycle of Feel, Do, Feel, Do, Feel, Do without ever debriefing yourself on the accomplishment. That is the killer trap. If more students could ask themselves, "How exactly did that good shot or great run of golf occur?" great golf wouldn't be the mystery it is to them.

As the results start to dwindle because of that fatigue or lack of renewed perspective, the Feel, Do morphs into:

Excitement
Expectancy
Disappointment
Anger
Anxiousness
Resignation

When stage six has been met, you will let go and submit. By the time you reach six, my friend, I fear you will have wasted much time and a lot of the reserves of your finite energy. Your confidence and faith in your unquestioned ability will wane.

2. See, Feel, Do

Take the time to recognize that the power and process of achievement is See, Feel, Do but be cognizant enough to revisit See once you have had success. To step back, distance, and see things with your own fresh eyes is the key I want to bestow upon you. In doing that, success won't be just fleeting and one time. It will reoccur.

My message to you in closing this lesson is to embody and weave the See, Feel, Do process into every shot, and I mean every shot, you play during your round!

Principles of Self and Golf Progression

1. Don't feel guilt when taking essential rest and reflection.
2. Don't view achievement as a fluke. See, Feel, Do is real.
3. Always debrief and revisit why you were successful.

3. By Design, Intelligent Fluke, and the Lost Souls of Golf

My dear student:

Our conversation at lunch gave me food for thought (excuse the pun), but it struck me that when you examine the best golfers in the world, it becomes very evident that they belong in certain categories. After twenty-five years of instructing every level of golfer from beginner rank to Major winners and World number ones, I realized the true art of teaching was first found in my ability to read the pupil and communicate on their terms and not mine.

It's fair to say that similar to assembling a car or a cell phone, we know the code for the golf swing. Every piece of the puzzle is out there with the exception of an individual's physiology and, even with that, we now have a succinct physical screening process that deciphers the DNA we have to work with.

As your mentor, friend, and teacher, it is paramount for me to be able to know your identity. What do I mean by that? The easiest example I can give you is that when a player's game is successfully built around controlled stealth and strategy, they should never attempt to rewire that template in order to morph into an aggressive power hitter. Clever is the golfer who not only knows what they can do but also what they cannot do. No question, everybody is capable of improvement, but it should never be at the sacrifice of your dominant and overriding DNA.

The following three definitions are not exclusive to golf. They're pretty much endemic to every sport known to man. Can you spot which one you are?

By Design

These golfers are crafted by a manufactured process. They learn, study, and assemble the machine piece by piece with the sole

purpose of efficiency and effectiveness. When something goes wrong, the user manual comes out, and they diagnose and fix problems very quickly.

Intelligent Fluke

These golfers have little knowledge about how they do things. They just do them. That is a little like opening and closing your fist. While you can make that happen, there is little or no understanding of how it happens. Those golfers are highly effective and they win big. What can decimate the career of innate golfers is when questions are asked about their genius. Paul McCartney was once asked how he creates so many memorable and catchy songs. His answer was that he didn't even want to know. If intelligent fluke golfers do answer an inquiry, a Pandora's box is disastrously opened and their talents are virtually unrecoverable since they suddenly learn how hard golf really is. In essence, that should be none of their business.

Lost Souls of Golf

These poor golfers bounce between By Design perfection, thinking that is the answer to everything, and Intelligent Fluke, where they let go of any intellectual or technical thoughts about the swing. When they assume the By Design profile, they spectacularly forget the artistry of the game, so, they often look good and the numbers look good but they perform and score poorly. When that becomes intolerable, they go full force the other way and employ a one-look- and-go, carefree, quick-fire mentality associated with the Intelligent Fluke. That is actually better for them because they start to flow and score lower. However, it will only be a matter of time before their egos become suspicious and proclaim it all too easy. And, sure enough, they go back to the cold, uncaring world of By Design. For the Lost Souls of Golf, that pattern repeats, and repeats, and repeats until they give the game up.

So, what do the Lost Souls do? How do they transcend the "is you is, or is you isn't?" The trick to settling down that model

3. By Design, Intelligent Fluke, and the Lost Souls of Golf

of golfer is to acknowledge that they must exist in both worlds. Once you do that, the struggle immediately stops. So, those golfers first have to quench the thirst for accurate information. Secondly, they must reduce the variables by deciding upon one shot they want to perfect. If your physical tendencies point toward a fade, then surely that would be a repeatable and sensible option. If your tendencies point toward a draw, then draw. It begs the question as to what is the point of continually trying to suppress a repeatable pattern in favor of trying to micromanage perfection? Keep what repeats and gently refine it.

As a solid rule, Lost Souls simply must document all of that on paper or on a tablet. It must be a quick-reference guidebook like the ones airline pilots have beside them when things go awry. They are lost because they are neurotic searchers for information. That must stop. Once they have the design, the model, and the template, they must now marry those into the physical and mental routines that allow everything to function. The engine is what you design and understand about your technique. The oil is the routine that allows it to perform without much conscious directive.

I sense that my understanding of you is an accurate one since our work together has been fruitful and effective. I request, however, that before our next session together, you sit back, reread the notes above, and identify which profile is the most familiar to you. Let's talk again soon.

Principles of Understanding Yourself

1. The goal is to either be an intelligent fluke or by design.
2. If you are a Lost Soul, be strong, disciplined, and change.
3. Ask close friends which identity they think you are.
4. Limit variables and choose one shot to become an expert at hitting.

4. Nine Steps to Greatness

My dear student:

Our time together should have revealed that I like to approach my mentorship at face value and that I don't want to formulate assumptions or attempt to prepackage your progress. Champions and winners don't just arrive. They are crafted by design or their natural environment. A phrase that has frankly made me bristle over the years is that a person has to be a natural in order to be good. That is an untrue statement.

Genius can be learned, and it can equally be unlearned. While we have certain parameters, such as the infamous 10,000-hour rule, the steps that we have to pass through are relatively vague. Until now, my friend.

There are nine steps to greatness. Greatness in anyone's terms can be defined as a place where your feelings become your reality and your skill level surpasses the challenge of the activity. Let's first look at the nine steps, then break them down individually.

1. Rebirth
2. Re-energize
3. Redesign
4. Retool yourself
5. Faith over belief from results
6. Debrief and plan
7. Emotional IQEntitlement
8. Intimidation

Rebirth

Some start this process after having endured a period of soul-searching and physical dismay. When exhaustion arrives, and the struggle is too much, there is a letting go and giving up that

immediately frees the victim. With a renewed clarity, rebirth occurs and often leads to essential simplification.

The birth of greatness starts when you not only have faith that what you are doing is correct with its technique and/or thought processes, but also when you have faith that what you are doing produces effective results. There is a fine line that must be rapidly crossed that comes between starting a new endeavor and gaining competency. If there is an initial struggle in experiencing pleasurable results for an individual who isn't resilient to failure, then it's likely they will quit.

So, the perfect birth needs a compliance or a fascination that will ultimately soften the road bumps that formative learning has always done. The individual will be challenged by the activity—in this case, golf—but they will already know at an obsessive level that they can become its master. Mastery starts with the notion that you can do just that . . . master.

Birth is the light from within that beckons one to lean in and delve further. It allows opportunity and intrigue to work their magic on any fresh and primed mind.

A genius is a person who not only embodies fundamentals but arrives at the table with uncommon natural attributes and a can-do attitude.

Re-energize

It goes without saying that without energy, nothing moves and nothing changes, and potentiality is zero. There are two types of energy we need for greatness. The first is physical. The second is spiritual. Whilst those two seem separate, they are inextricably linked at deeper levels of consciousness.

From the physical aspect, we have to realize a slight paradox is at work. You have to become tired before you become strong. The body's responses are similar to a trampoline inasmuch as the harder you hit the canvas, the bigger the energy creation and the rebound.

We have seen in recent years the proof that physical prowess is a critical component of greatness as certain PGA Tour players

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make a mockery of once-revered courses. No longer do golf holes have a domino effect of strategy from tee to green. Because of the physically astute players, balls now easily hit over the first nine dominos en route to the tenth.

So, if you have been a little lax recently regarding your physical conditioning, realize now that it will take a few sessions before the trampoline effect starts to propel you to a place where your body responds in kind to this unique two-way relationship. Some golfers put off initiating a physical routine because they simply don't know where to start. Let me offer you a suggestion. Start with what I term the 10-10-10 system: 10 pushups, 10 sit ups, and 10 squats. That is not too physically taxing but it is enough to initiate and get you going. As you continue day by day, add in another couple of reps. I assure you it won't be long before you are comfortable at a 20-20-20 level, and will have the confidence to extend even further as time passes.

With basic fitness and conditioning, other key factors such as injury prevention, longevity, technical versatility, and body speed can all materialize.

To answer an age-old question, "What comes first, the physical or the mental?" the answer is the physical. To demonstrate that, imagine a professional NASCAR driver competing against an ordinary person off the street. The race for the two drivers will have one distinct feature—the ordinary Joe will be driving a fully tuned race car and the NASCAR driver will be in a Nissan Micra. It simply won't matter what strategic secrets or mental willpower the NASCAR driver employs. The rookie will win hands down because his car is obviously superior. Another way to prove it reveals itself in the learning process. We find that as students in golf improve physically from a technical standpoint, their mental capacity to engage and hit better shots increases. That mental aptitude would not be present if there was no physical evidence to back it up.

From the spiritual point of view, with spirit defined as mental potency, we must embrace two key habits. The first is the crucial act of mental diversity. To understand that, use this metaphor: if

your golf weighs 100 tons, so should your distraction or hobby. Over the years, I have seen countless professional golfers burn out because of a neurotic obsession with a desire to be successful in the game. While that notion is commendable, most fail due to an unhealthy life balance and mental fatigue. Diversify your life because, aside from anything else, it actually makes life more fun.

Second, take the time to sit, breath, and visualize where you presently are and where you want to go. Meditation is scientifically proven to boost the alpha wave rhythm that marries what you see to what you feel. I can testify to that from personal and professional experience. Personally, I have used meditation while visualizing the images in my previous award-winning books *The 7 Laws of the Golf Swing* and *Kinetic Golf*. When needing a powerful image that would have significant meaning, I would often meditate and allow an unshackled mind to play for a while until it inevitably came up with the answer I was looking for. So, I urge you to meditate on how you want your personal presence to be and I promise you'll see and feel the difference.

Redesign

One of my favorite words in my business is blunder. Yes, if I had a dollar for every time I met a Simon Scattergun, a person hoping to blunder into form or bump into success in the middle of the night, I'd be a far wealthier man.

Astonishingly, I spend a large amount of my time consulting with presidents of companies, bankers, and tournament professionals in order to reform them from a Simon Scattergun to a Simon the Sniper during development. Focused efficiency makes all the difference.

You must take your existing skills and leverage them while in the redesign phase because you simply cannot leverage what you do not have. For most, they will already have the skills necessary to make a difference in their businesses, their performances, and their lives. What has happened in the interim period, however,

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is an exposure to a distracting environment in which they try to chase three potential rabbits instead of a guaranteed one.

Whether it is to refresh what you already have, rebuilding or rebranding, bear these three basic questions in mind:

- How will it work?
- How will it feel?
- How will it look?

Take the time to design. It will save you from putting out fires later.

Retool Yourself

Do you want to be the person who shouts from the roof tops that it can't be done only to be interrupted by a person doing it? The answer, I would hope, is no. Retooling initially means stepping back from your current reality and realizing what you must develop into. As Jim Rohn said, "If you want more, you have to become more."

The net result of the redesign phase is discovering where the challenges lie for you so that you can make your greatest personal or professional gain. That doesn't solely mean having to learn a new physical skill. As an example, it could also point to the reality that you must mentally prepare for a period of tough negotiations or prolonged patience. The key question to ask yourself is what do you need? That requires personal honesty, self-evaluation, and the dissolving of the ego. Change or be changed? Retooling and change is the preferable answer.

Faith Over Belief From Results

Just a quick note on these two words, faith and belief. While they may allude to the same thing, they are very different. Let me explain it to you.

When truly understood, the word belief, or *lief*, which originates from the Anglo-Saxons, means to wish or hope for. When spoken in terms such as "I believe this pilot can fly the

plane,” or “I have a belief in the supernatural,” you can instantly sense the flakiness of a wish or a desperate hope over any feeling of certainty. Therefore, you’ll find that people who believe simply must believe because that purges a clinginess and an obsessive clutching from the psyche. For example, you often hear of people holding onto their beliefs.

Without a true foundation, belief—which is an unskilled person’s faith—is the only thing you can drive into a bargain. The very illusion of belief will only promote doubt, anxiety, and a suffocating constant stream of thought about the very thing you want to believe in, yet can’t. Imagine attending a one-day parachuting class where the instructor you will jump with quips, “I believe I’ve packed your parachute correctly.”

Faith is altogether different. When you have faith, you can let go and function. When you have a sense of faith, it is born from the origin of tangible evidence and results.

“Yes,” says the passenger, “I do have faith this pilot can fly the plane.” That statement is pregnant with the knowledge and the fact that flying is the safest way to travel.

That passenger is far more likely to sit back, relax, and enjoy the flight rather than grapple with the armrests with wide eyes and greasy palms. Faith allows you to let go of the rock in the river and effortlessly float downstream. Downstream is mental permission. It crystallizes the sage wisdom that says habits eat intentions for breakfast and faith through evidence is a psychological reality of the mind.

Debrief and Plan

Now that you have primed your body and your mind with a fresh perspective and physical potency, it’s time to acknowledge where you have been, where you are now, and what you want to be. That isn’t to say you should have a sudden attack of cognitive dissonance, disassociating with anything you have done in the past. The paper trail you leave behind tells stories of successes and failures, both of which contain vital lessons for growth.

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The key phrase I want you to repeat over and over is to see the truth for what it is. Reflecting and planning means the removal of any rose-tinted glasses because this is not the time to be romantic and sentimental. This is the time to bare the facts about what you have tried, attempted, thought about, and listened to. Here is a practice I teach my elite players. While on the road, they have a quick reference guide similar to the one pilots use during times of concern. First, think back in your life and write down with a black pen all the things that produced pleasing results and growth. Conversely, write in red everything that you considered to be a waste of time and resources.

Once you have formulated that list, build initially on the good and attempt to identify the threads—even if they were fleeting moments—that generated a spike in performance and mental fortitude. Those threads are clues and when in front of you they should provide a decipherable pattern.

While we imagine that breakthroughs arrive from a place of mystery, it is often the case that all you did was to give the brain a chunk of clear evidence from which it could join the dots.

See the truth for what it is. Debrief, analyze what has transpired, then plan!

Emotional IQ

Amateur golfers concern themselves with the superfluous while the very best professionals live only for the relevant. Let's examine another truth. The golf course just sits. It doesn't care if you are happy, sad, elated, or despondent. It just sits and represents a flat unperturbed attitude to anything you do.

Emotional intelligence in golf arises when the individual aligns more to a process rather than emotional selfish needs. Let me give you a quick example.

When I first started working with PGA Tour superstar, Kevin Chappell, I noticed a unique pattern to his scorecards. Ordinarily, he'd start off pretty steady early in a round but, as the course unfolded, so did Kevin's emotions. Two bogies were normally followed by a flourish of birdies or an eagle. Similarly,

if the round started in spectacular fashion, he could quite easily sabotage a low score by acting on an emotional impulse to further attack when, in fact, the golf course required a period of defending.

Emotional intelligence allows process-driven actions, which is stardust in golf. Emotional unintelligence confirms that as humans our frontal lobes are still too small and our adrenal glands are way too big.

I taught US Open Champion and European number one Justin Rose that great golf is 99 percent process for a 1 percent result. I want the same for you.

Entitlement

As we get closer to a pinnacle of greatness, we sense a feeling of entitlement. Strangely enough, that feeling isn't driven by greed. No, that variation of entitlement is a gift from your psyche for getting to that point. It is the stark recognition that if you have worked this hard to get this far, then you have no problem taking the fruits of your labor.

The reality is you cannot get entitlement by demand. That is also why fluke victories in sport are also few and far between. To truly step into the arena and not worry about whether it's your turn, what your peers will think of you, or whether you are indeed worthy of winning at any level, is an entitlement of mind you must earn.

If amateurs could understand that equation a little clearer, it would make the game so much more enjoyable. To receive and invest in regular instruction from a reputable professional will authentically grow the feeling of an entitlement to play well for the weekend warrior. It's a paradox but to be entitled in sport involves diligent work behind the scenes.

Intimidation

The last step for greatness is intimidation. The interesting aspect about this step is it can be willfully exploited, or kept under wraps. When you have it, you have risen above the thinking of

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the average competitor and thus they start to pay more attention to you than to themselves. That was no more evident than during the early stages of Tiger Woods' career.

In the past, Rory McIlroy recognized his ability to turn heads in his direction. Time and time again, we saw him post images on social media while in the gym pumping iron and squatting weights. That wasn't for vanity, or part of a contractual obligation. He was sending out a clear message of intimidation to his peers. "Look at me," these images say. "I'm not only talented but I am also outworking you."

In the most subtle and clever way, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods leveraged intimidation but in the form of reverse psychology. Often both would play down their pretournament form—Nicklaus more so than Woods—but the message transmitted to the other players was one of mockery.

Nicklaus and Woods knew they were going to win. The other players knew they were going to win. And the other players knew that Nicklaus and Woods knew they were going to win.

The same could be said for Muhammed Ali who, early in his career, announced during press conferences that not only would he win but he would also say in what round he would remove his competition.

And there you have it: The Nine Steps to Greatness in Golf. My advice is not to attempt to run through them as fast as possible but to sit and digest them slowly. Recognize when one strikes a chord with you and then challenge yourself to improve in that area.

Let's discuss this at the start of our next workshop . . .

The Principles En Route to Greatness

1. Study the eight steps.
2. Be honest and ruthless with yourself. What do you need to do?
3. Plan, create a timeline, and an action for the above.

5. The Preciousness of Time

My dear golfer:

As you know, I don't believe there are many items left in the book of golf that can get us to the next level, and that is why you'll frequently spy non-golfing books on the shelf in my office.

I'm sure you've heard this quote: "You can get more money but you can't get more time."

That obvious allusion points to the fleeting twenty-four hours you and I have every day. That period doesn't change depending on your location, your family background, or your bank balance. In essence, time is always on the move whether you like it or not; therefore, trying to manage and control time is an impossibility. That is a distinctly different proposition from managing your personal energy and focus.

I can't assume, dear friend, but if you've ever felt that your life has been interjected with periods of procrastination, ponder that stark reality for a second. How long did five years ago feel to you? How long ago was it when we first met? I'm sure it feels like a blink—like yesterday, in fact. Yet, the reality is that it was quite some time ago! What would you give to go back to some year and recoup all the lost moments with loved ones and all of your personal development? So, can we explain why it feels just like yesterday? The answer is, yes. Consider this. When you were ten years old, one year was one-tenth of your life. That's a considerable chunk and still within touching distance from year one. It's still mentally visible.

When you turn forty-five, however, the landscape stretches out somewhat. Now, one year is only a forty-fifth of your life. It's a sliver of time amongst the other forty-four years. Feelings are much more resonant than numbers. It's tough to feel the way you did forty plus years ago because calling up that feeling

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memory is a thoughtful task. To feel a five-year period, however, is relatively easy and explains why you sense it's still within touching distance.

The point of this text is to implore you to use time wisely. Here is a small formula from me to you:

1. Decide the three most important tasks you want to complete before anything else.
2. Create a hierarchy from the smallest job to the largest.
3. Begin tasks one at a time, and when you can repeat it daily or weekly until you finish it.
4. Remember, I've taught you that habits eat intentions for breakfast. Either do it or don't, but don't complain either way. Just get it done.

Time is such a workable asset. To fully acknowledge it as the precious commodity it is, work from the perspective of how it will feel if it doesn't get done. Time doesn't slow down for anybody. It's a bus you can get on and ride to other destinations, so don't stand idling on the curb watching time drive by. Take your golf by the scruff of the neck and change it for the better. I have faith you will comply.

Principles of Respecting and Using Time

1. It's a commodity you never get back. Use it wisely.
2. Work from the smallest task to the biggest task.
3. It'll hurt when you look back and you know you squandered your time here. Avoid that.

6. Trapped by Success? Learn Oliver's Axiom

My dear student:

I wanted to pull up some statistics for you before I saw you again. I have been delighted with your recent progress and the success in your game, but as strange as it may seem this euphoria can come at a price. I need to caution you about an unseen trap ahead.

Let's look at golf's major championships as an example. Since the year 2000, there have been sixty-eight majors played at the time of this writing and 82 percent of those have been won by one and done players.

There are three ways to look at that. The first is to realize that a whopping 82 percent of majors can be won by one and done players and it begs the question whether a major win is really the gold standard anymore.

The second perspective is to recognize that after attaining that singular accolade, the winners were done and dusted. They simply could not replicate a major championship win.

Conversely, you could look a little deeper than mere statistics and discover something more intrinsic at the wheel of the athlete psyche.

The revelation doesn't just apply to golf. No, this malady is first a human condition, and second an unrecognized habit.

The entrapment of success starts when you initiate the endeavor you want to engage with. Let me give you an example. When Jack Nicklaus was in his formative golfing years, he was acutely aware of Bobby Jones' thirteen major championship record. Jones was Nicklaus' idol, and, as such, he wanted to first emulate Jones, then beat his tally of thirteen majors, which he duly did. Nicklaus had an abundant mentality.

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As you know, history has a habit of repeating itself; funnily enough, we've witnessed that exact re-enactment between Tiger Woods and his idol, Jack Nicklaus. You should understand that from the outset Tiger Woods had complete disregard for and despised the prospect of banking just one major. That tally, if you can call it that, meant nothing to him.

The majority of humans are not cognitively hardwired like that. While beginning a new activity or sport, most people will not search for great musicians, sports people, politicians, or inventors on YouTube, then proclaim, "I'm going to be better than that one day!"

Although most individuals start with bite-sized goals, they will usually know, or certainly have a good hunch, where the highest echelon of a particular endeavor resides. They will, therefore, have this natural mantra, or a mindset: "I want to be like that one day."

That is commonly known as being realistic.

Notice the mantra doesn't entertain the notion that they could indeed be better than the expert whose record they so greatly admire. That faith-based conviction is reserved specifically for the individuals who are cognitively hardwired differently.

By setting the bar at emulation and not domination, we immediately dictate a limiting level of attainment or achievement. The earlier in life that ceiling is created, the more it will become that person's inner reality. In other words, it will become deeply seated in their consciousness. That isn't to say that a dedicated student like yourself can't reframe and adopt what I call "the climbing attitude," but you'll need a focused mind with elevated role models and an aggressive mentality.

I've coined the problem of one and done as Oliver's Axiom, which takes its name from a famous scene in the film *Oliver*. After finishing his bowl of food, the young orphan gingerly makes his way to the front of the hall where they are continuing to serve food. Carving a lonely figure, he meekly looks up at the intimidating schoolmaster and asks, "Please, sir, I want some more."

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“What . . . more?” shouted the astonished schoolmaster.

“More!”

Oliver's Axiom is incredibly influential in the career of any individual, whether you're a golfer or an executive. To have the capacity to exceed your peers and then continue to want more is a unique trait which so few attain, but one I need you to seize upon immediately.

Once a self-prescribed level of attainment has been met, or, in the case of the opening paragraph, a player reaches that one major championship they always dreamt of, the asking for more is done, the light has fizzled out, and the shop is permanently closed.

Since we have discussed on numerous occasions that golf imitates life, I can make my advice somewhat poignant. One day you will be old and grey, dribbling oatmeal down your chin, and that day is closer than you think. Aggressive demands and expectations of yourself are worth living for every day, and it would be a mistake not to push beyond any initial success you may have already had.

It's okay to be Oliver and want some more, but only if you think you're worth it.

I know you are, but do you?

Principles of Perpetual Achievement

1. You don't need any other person's permission to
2. Improve and grow.
3. Early success is not the end of the road. it's an
4. Obligation to grow further.
5. Wanting more is not a sin. A sin is walking away from your hard work and talent. Play hard.

7. The Art of Role Modeling

My dear protégé:

Forgive me, but I have noticed during our recent conversations that you have become increasingly fascinated with other golfers, particularly ones playing on tours. I think that is encouraging, and it reminds me of Sir Isaac Newton's quote, "If I have seen further, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants."

I want to make a clear but worthwhile distinction between role modeling and body language. A body language technique involves the perpetrator assuming a stance, a pose, a movement, or a gesticulation with the sole intention of altering one's personal performance, or human-to-human interaction. In essence, we are talking about acting your way into a certain state, or trying to convince others that you are a certain person.

In a way, this is not unlike the technique employed by method actors who literally live out the role they are meant to be portraying in order to become that person. I want to give you two examples of where the trickery of body language technique fails in two key areas.

Example One

Think about a golf course you know as well as any. I am sure you can picture the first hole clearly. Imagine you and I are standing on the first tee, and in my hand I hold a blindfold which I proceed to wrap around your eyes. Ensuring you can see nothing, I then implore you to feel confident, stand upright, puff out your chest, shake your hands with clenched fists, and feel assertive. Having succeeded in changing your body state, I then spin you around three times and ask you to walk down the first fairway.

What transpires is that I witness you confidently, proudly, and assertively step out and fall into the nearest fence or plant pot. The reality of your temporary blindness represents a physical

skill level you do not currently possess and that is not something I want to happen to any student of mine.

Example Two

Another failing of body language techniques can be found in the experiential. You cannot acquire tacit wisdom or the savvy to hit problems head on simply by acting your way through them. Trust me when I say that while polished actors can convince us through extraordinary performances of make-believe pain or pleasure, they will never in a million years totally experience the raw sensations and emotions of the individual that they emulate. By that token, I can attempt to tell you what it's like to stand on the first tee of a Ryder Cup and hit the first tee shot but until you actually experience the reality of your body overriding your mind, you will never appreciate its full impact.

Role modeling is vastly different, however. It gives you time. While you may have chosen a role model who at this time far exceeds your current skill set and experience, role modeling won't hold a gun at your head forcing you into an immediate modus operandi.

Role modeling is who you are striving to be, what you are working toward, and what you ultimately one day want to experience. Because of that, I fully endorse role modeling for you as my student. Keep assimilating and keep copying!

Here are some gems on role modeling:

- Pick an individual or several individuals who closely match your body type. I can help you with that.
- Choose an individual that feels familiar to you in terms of demeanor and character.
- Select the person or persons whose story or background you can relate to the easiest.
- Assign a role model that mirrors your work ethic and approach to improvement.

7. The Art of Role Modeling

I am glad this concept has come to my attention because role modeling is an essential requirement for accelerated improvement. Without it, the trial and error cycle will become more and more frequent. Why fumble around while trying to design yourself? With careful selection, many of the clues will be immediately available to you.

Now, back to Sir Isaac.

Whose shoulders should you be climbing upon now?

Principles of Effective Role Modelling

1. Be wise in your choice of role model. They must
2. closely reflect you.
3. Body language techniques are foolish and will ultimately let you down.
4. This is not stealing. Every great achiever has stolen with pride.

8. To Grow, Jump from the Hamster Wheel Often

My dear student:

Like the proverbial hamster spinning on his wheel, I am often guilty of getting caught up in a cycle of perpetual doing and thinking that I am lucid and in control when, in fact, I am asleep at the wheel. For the hamster who can't break free from the all-consuming activity of running in one spot, it simply sees and experiences the inside of its hamster wheel. In the case of a golfer, the thought constantly on the mind is that they are both trapped and imprisoned by their vocation.

To grow as a golfer, you must have the ability to jump from your wheel when you notice stagnancy, or if you are feeling like you are just going through the motions. For many people, however, that task is deceptively tough and extremely difficult to pull off, and I want to tell you why.

It is not uncommon to realize we are simply going through the motions, yet it is incredibly common to be incapable of prying ourselves away when monotony stares us squarely in the face. Why is this, and what is the benefit of jumping off?

The Good Thing About Jumping Off Your Hamster Wheel

If I repeat one adage to you, my friend, that sums up the process of golf, it is this: habits will eat intentions for breakfast. If habits are as powerful as I believe, then the habit of a routine, whether it is good or bad, will simply place you into a holding pattern until otherwise redirected. Some habits are, of course, effective and good for us. An example is when our feelings match reality, and the reality is exactly what we're meant to be doing.

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Please remember that a feeling of utopia—when everything is clicking—is somewhat of an illusion, and it can induce a belief that it will last forever. The stark reality, of course, is that it doesn't.

Those who have cultivated the knack of jumping off regularly will have the ability to detach and observe their current activity, habit, and process. As a golfer, this is a priceless skill to develop since it ushers in the chance to debrief and grow. Watching your game from 30,000 feet might just allow you to modify key aspects of it and prevent today's unseen inefficiency from breeding into tomorrow's decline in performance.

We hire consultants, instructors, and mentors to see what we can't. You may be surprised to learn that I have a mentor. I long ago recognized that every coach needs a coach! The eye cannot see itself, the flame cannot burn itself, and your golf game or your individual skill set cannot self-correct while revolving around a hamster wheel. Like the paid consultant, you have to first take a broad look at your game, then shortly after apply a more detailed and scrutinized analysis. That can only be done, however, with scheduled detachment.

So, where is the difficulty? Jumping off the wheel seems perfectly logical, doesn't it?

Well, to you and me it does, but this proposition is a direct threat to the ego.

The Challenge About Jumping Off the Hamster Wheel

The ego is relatively dormant until there is an emotional or intellectual challenge on the horizon. The first emotion the ego will put you through is guilt. Guilt for the stoppage of work. If that is what you feel, then I urge you to be strong and let the logic of your head overrule the pull of your heart. Golfers should step back and evaluate their game often as opposed to blindly playing from stubborn habit.

8. To Grow, Jump from the Hamster Wheel Often

The ego will not like any prospect of change, which, if warranted, would immediately signify inadequacy followed by a pending restructure. The restructure, or learning of new habits, could possibly reveal a weakness, or, worse still, make you look foolish while redeveloping. The ego will likely push back on that possibility.

So, how do you dampen the ego's power over your psyche?

You simply can't ignore or demand the ego to leave the premises of your mind. In trying to do that, you employ, guess what—yes, the ego again. It's called in like a bouncer at the door of your local nightclub, but this time you have created a bigger ego that suppresses and controls its little brother. Like the Russian Matryoshka dolls that get progressively bigger when you restack them, your ego assumes a bigger version of itself in order to swallow the smaller version. You have strengthened its nature.

What is the answer, then? If you don't like the feeling of detachment, then simply acknowledge that it's simply the way you feel. It should not be used, however, as an excuse not to schedule the time away from the game you desperately need in order to observe.

The next step is to realize that you don't have to immediately plunge in and go cold turkey with your time away from the game. Taking bite-sized chunks of quality time to reflect on the effectiveness and the purpose of what you do, and the frequency of when you do it, is the perfect start to a period of essential reflection.

What is your hamster wheel? In your hierarchy of activities, which one is the most important to you technically, physically, or spiritually? I can, of course, help you with that if you so wish. Which one do you value so much that you'd hate to see the quality and quantity of it wane into an average category? Ignore the pull and the whining of your ego and engage in regular observation.

Bring your diary the next time we meet.

Principles of Personal Rejuvenation

1. You can't evaluate effectively while still engaged in the activity, so jump.
2. See re-evaluation as a priority and not a time wasting exercise.
3. Look at both the small (process) and large (end goal) details during observation.

9. Discipline

My dear pupil:

I will be honest with you as a mentor should be. This morning, I was disappointed that our session didn't display a progression from your previous visit. I was confident that your understanding of what needed to be achieved was clear. If more important and pressing personal items came up, then I apologize for this inquiry. If that was not the case, then this may be an opportunity to talk about discipline and the role it plays with every successful individual I have mentored.

Every decision in life is represented within a polarity named Yes and No. Even a Maybe will shift one way or the other in due course. My observation of any successful person I have met and mentored is that they have a conviction when it comes to deciding upon one of those choices. The conviction is born from knowing what has to be done and when they have to do it. There is no procrastination, there is no limp excuse, and there is never the thought of just getting by until next time. If a Maybe is hanging around in your consciousness, then I will leave you with this axiom: if there is doubt, there is no doubt. In essence, that means listen to your intuition—which is knowledge—and go with it.

Discipline also means having the ability to finish a job you have started. I recall when my son was a youngster and he planted the seeds from an apple he'd just eaten. With impatience for signs of growth that was fierce, he one day took a shovel and dug the seeds up to see if anything had indeed happened.

When I speak to companies about discipline, I often refer to the workers responsible for constructing a tall skyscraper. All they do, day after day, is follow the build plan laid out in front of them. It would do no good whatsoever to whimsically look skyward and wish the skyscraper were a higher level than it

is. Fortunately, the experienced foreman knows that soon, by having the discipline to follow a well-designed plan, he will be sixty stories high when the job is completed.

The 21st century gives us plenty of opportunities to become distracted. It seems that our attention is being wolf-whistled at every moment, and yet, as it has always been and as it will always be, the individual that achieves skyscraper growth will bury their head in their work and get things done.

The key to growth is discipline. Let's grow, my friend, day by day, and layer by layer. One day you will look down at your once unrecognizable self.

Principles of a Disciplined Life

1. Remember everything in life is a Yes or a No. Even a Maybe will eventually decide.
2. No one can teach you discipline as it is self-responsibility.
3. Discipline means putting your head down and working without peaking every two minutes to check progress.

10. Understanding Impatience

My dear student:

I want to start today by demystifying golfing enemy number one: impatience. Impatience loses tournaments, ruins relationships, and creates anxiety in all walks of life. This is a good time to talk to you about it since I know how much you have technically improved, but your scores do not reflect that just yet. Impatience is starting to gnaw at you, I can tell.

They say that patience is a virtue. Of that I am not so sure. No question, there are some situations, mostly ones out of your control, in which patience can become a useful mindset. Even then, though, while waiting on another event to manifest, you could be designing or actioning another important activity. So, is patience a virtue? I'd say no. At best, it's a passive attitude toward something that you're waiting on but ideally shouldn't be. There are always things to do!

Maybe some think that patience is a virtue because no one has ever taken the time to explain impatience and why it induces panic and rushed decision making. That is your lesson today, my apprentice. Impatience occurs because impatience is seeing something long before it is manifested.

Understand that our thoughts can only arrive one at a time like trains in a station. Try having two thoughts at the same time—it's impossible. Our imagination is a completely different mechanism. Its strength lies in its ability to manifest complete pictures of future events. It can instantaneously conjure up where you need to go, what it will look like, and the steps you'll need to take to get there.

Since thoughts are linear and singular in their arrival, there is no way they can ever hope to live up to the imagination's magic trick of seeing before something is manifested.

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Frustration and impatience are then born. The intellect cannot understand why it can't have those things now and naturally becomes impatient for the event to arrive.

So, what is the answer? The answer arrives in two parts. First, embrace that newfound understanding of why you're feeling impatient. There can be fewer annoying things in life than experiencing a feeling and not knowing its origin. Second, ask yourself if there is anything you can be doing in that moment that places you closer to the finished article found in your imagination. One percent progress a day is 100 percent in just over three months.

To reiterate to you, my friend, impatience is not necessarily a bad thing. It shows imagination and a desire to get things done. Just remember that most things in life must be worked for. You can't attain much through demands.

Principles to Overcome Impatience

1. Read this letter again to fully understand the origin of impatience.
2. What can you do now to influence your end goal?
3. Look at how far you have come. It will seem like a blink.
The future is the same, so don't wish it here too quickly!