

We have taken the liberty to add friends with whom we wanted to share our newsletter. As with all transmissions these days, this one doesn't have to be in your inbox. If you prefer not to have it sent every two months, just let us know.

Also, we have elected to provide a URL from which our readers may download the current issue so as to deter anything resembling "spam." Thanks, CGM

One Under Par

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A Newsletter from **CLEARKEYGOLF**.....April, 2010

Golfer's Stew... Food for the Wannabe

"Potpourri" was originally defined as "a pot of stew." It might make a great book title for today's "golf nation." There certainly is plenty of "stew" to go around. Whether you are visiting a forum, reading an article in some golf magazine, subscribing to the Bleacher Report's golf section, watching Hank Haney try to rescue Charles Barkley or Ray Romano, tuning in a tour event and hearing the commentators and players describing "what happened," reviewing the latest report from golf research, or just realizing that any news program is sure to get around to Tiger-talk sooner than later, it should not come as a surprise that "stew" is a pretty good metaphor for cluttered output from all quarters.

So what's the problem? It's quite simple, though very few have bothered to look and fewer still have noticed. The short of it is that all that golf "stew" is being generated by a "sin of omission." The "omission" is in (or rather "out of") the minds of an overwhelming majority of golfers and their helpers, advisors, apologists, gurus, high priests, and noblepersons, in the form of missing or ignored information and knowledge that should be on the "most vital list." That, in turn, centers in the absence of what would otherwise be solid help for players who need to be able to negotiate the 14 seconds available to move from pre-shot through transition and shot-execution till the ball is gone. That missing dimension forms a protected cocoon created by knowing how to postpone mental aberrations that not only can, but regularly do, disturb shot-making. Unfortunately, that is missing from every program, book and article, in the golf world, except for what we bring to the table at ClearKeyGolf. We have done that for years through the automatic process and use of a clear key, which releases and frees the thinking process belonging to the nonconscious part of the mind from the tyranny of the conscious mind long enough to make a shot, uninterrupted by mental garbage. And make no mistake - all that follows principles that adhere specifically to the laws of human behavior and the physiological demands made upon our systems by the presence of anxiety and its effect on the human central nervous system, particularly the immune system, just as surely as the law of gravity keeps you and me from flying away from the face of the earth, without benefit of locomotion.

No matter where one turns everybody has an opinion - and that's OK, unless those opinions are given credit for infallibility, as they often are, even though "shanked" by misperception or flat out ignorance (defined as "lacking knowledge")

Examine just a few samples of the typical, commonplace flood of well-intentioned answers given for forum questions like, "How do I get my game from the range to the course?" or "Why can I swing it perfect on my practice swing and then flip my wrists when it's time to play?" or "What is the one shot you can pull off when it counts?" or "How do I keep it together for 18 holes?" And there are many others of similar ilk all of which get responses that relate only to results, without so much as a mention of a process that caused the result. We conclude that golfers have simply defaulted to a belief that if the result is mechanical, the cause must be as well, so fix the result

and that will take care of the cause. Sadly, that is wrong, wrong, wrong, but so completely accepted as "gospel," that even the best dentist in the world would not be able to "pull that wisdom tooth."

We wonder why no one seems to have noticed that fixing a result is the stuff of a trauma center after an accident. It's tough, though, to "fix" a shot that went OB, but bet your bippy, someone will try to explain how to do that on a forum. And that explanation will always be aimed at introducing some mechanical alternative intended to create a better result, along with a mechanical strategy that "should fix it." No, we can't.

Even Haney can't "fix" Barkley or Romano because he is focusing primarily on the mechanical results and how to fix them. The captivating influence in golf that follows tradition to the letter is locked into that format. Even Tiger can't get away from that trap, enlarged and magnified by what appear as missteps in the rest of his present life. If the notion, absorbed in fixing mechanical issues, were not so powerful, there would be far fewer basket cases among golfers than actually exist.

Have you ever heard a golf commentator report on the thought processes required in the game beyond a simple, "What was he thinking?" or "His thinking was messed up." Have you ever heard a player recap a round based on anything other than results? (As we write, Peter Kostis is describing the mechanics of a poor swing Mickelson just made, but no statement of a cause, other than "hanging back," which under examination is really another result oriented symptom.) We could have missed it, of course, but if references to a balance between mental and mechanical issues were the order of the day, only a few would have overlooked the benefits of examining what really causes glitches and stumbles. It is a documentable certainty that there are more errors committed in every round of golf from mental mismanagement than from mechanical origins. They only show up in players' rear view mirrors as being mechanical, so they apply what they think they know and wind up grappling with fixing the result.

The fact is that the order of the day for players is to be complacently satisfied with hearing no more than outcome statements about anything, so they are left with plenty of room to wax eloquently about how "the result can be fixed." We find it tragic that not a single solution offered, that we can find, mentions the most critical time frame in the game and its prominent mental management - the 7-14 seconds after pre-shot planning until the ball is in full flight - the limited time during which a player has a club in hand moving it toward contact with the ball.

Consider: The principles connected to action state that "Every action is preceded by a thought connected to that action." In other words there is no such thing as a "thoughtless action or behavior." The principle goes on to say. "If the thought is poor, so will the result be poor." What most appear to miss is that all thinking is not registered consciously, leaving the masses blind-sided because they do not hear or see what is going on as the action actually takes place. By the time a problem emerges, it is after the fact - too late to do anything more than ruminate over the result (usually followed by "what should have been done.")

The first decade of the current century has produced research that shows the following:

- *The conscious brain makes up about 17 percent of total brain mass and controls just 2 to 4 percent of actual perceptions and behavior. The nonconscious brain makes up about 83 percent of total brain mass and controls 96 to 98 percent of perceptions and behavior.*
- *Conscious impulses travel at speeds of 120 to 140 MPH, while nonconscious impulses travel at more than 100,000 MPH!*
- *The conscious brain processes about 2,000 bits of information per second, while the nonconscious brain processes about 400,000,000,000 bits of information per second. Yes, you read that right: Four Hundred Billion.*
- *The conscious brain is volitional, meaning it is controlled by conscious will, it sets goals and judges the results. The nonconscious brain is servile, meaning it sets no goals of its own. It*

executes the goals it is provided with. It doesn't judge the merits of results, only whether they match the given goals.

- The conscious brain perceives past and future, and the nonconscious brain has no concept of time. Everything is happening now as far as it is concerned.

- The conscious brain has a very short term memory span, about 20 seconds for most people. The nonconscious brain remembers everything it experiences, forever.

[Notice particularly the phrases, "The conscious brain...judges results." and, "The nonconscious brain...doesn't judge the merits of results, only whether they match the given goals."]

Larry Squire, Ph.D., professor of neurosciences, psychiatry and psychology at the VAMC and UCSD points out that *"humans might have the ... capacity to acquire habit memory, but that this capability is ordinarily obscured by our excellent capacity to learn by conscious memorization."*

What that means is that we all "think way too much" and that blocks our seeming effort to learn and retain actions and behaviors that will serve us constantly and consistently.

Put that research beside the known entity that every action is preceded by a thought, and it is virtually impossible to dismiss the reality that golfers' conscious minds are vastly overworked and over-stressed by attempts to control action, and nonconscious mental activity is seriously unnoticed, underrated, and underutilized because the conscious portion is busy ignoring anything other than observable results. That is inevitably followed by trying to manipulate the result instead of understanding and preventing the issues that produces those results.

So we say again, it is time to "turn the page" to effective understanding and employment of our multi-thinking resources along with a strategy for effective habit development, and finally giving full permission to the nonconscious to "do its thing." Only then will we be in position to elevate our personal games to our own best levels and save some of the lifetime supply of energy we own for another day and game.