



ENVISIONING YOUR FUTURE

This article does not pretend to predict your future but it may help you to envision your future. First, let me explain the basis for my claim and how it has been used to help many people who feel stuck in a certain pattern. In my book The Mental Side of Golf, one of the training methods that I teach is how to envision a golfer's next shot. Essentially what this process does is to "paint a picture" in your mind of how you would want a next golf shot to be executed previous to sticking the ball. The more precisely you are able to accomplish that end, the greater the chances that your mental picture will correspond to the actual next shot. This is not a theory. The process actually works and is used by most, if not all, of the PGA and LPGA professional golfers in order to excel in their play.

This is not magic. The training does take some time to master but it is achievable nevertheless. One of the more common usages for which golfers depend on it is when they are in a "slump" and may be repeating their making a mistake. The envisioning process enables them to move their minds from trying too hard to change their swing routine to changing their mind set which is all that a slump really is. A slump is believing that we cannot do something that we have already accomplished and no amount of repetition or practice is going to correct the problem until the mind set is changed. Remember that your mind is a very powerful tool that you can use to your benefit instead of adding to your frustration.

In life, as in golf, all of us might go into a "slump" that might tend to plague us. It interferes with our personal functioning, happiness, relationships, productivity and on-and-on. Trying too hard change the slump will often tend to make it worse because what we're really doing is repeating the practice of the problem instead of offering ourselves a resolution. The key to envisioning is being able to relax the mind as completely as possible. We can accomplish this by sitting quietly and relaxing every muscle in our body. When I'm teaching the method, I usually start with asking the person to start with their toes and feet and work upward to their head but there is no rigid order that needs to be followed. Whatever works for an individual is the "right thing".

Being able to accomplish that will affect your breathing which will slow down as a result of the relaxed state that is being achieved. Slower breathing is always a clear signal that you are more relaxed. As that is accomplished, your mind will "follow suite" and relax as well. Apart from moving into an envisioning process, the state that I just described is

extremely comfortable and a great stress reducer in our life routine which I would highly recommend to everyone to practice at least once a day. But getting back to learning how to envision, once a relaxed state is accomplished, “see” or envision the problem or issue about which you are concerned and begin to imagine various solutions. Just let your mind roam without any particular direction or control on your part. Just **ALLOW** the process to happen. Entertain as many solution alternatives as your mind allows and then go over them to choose the best one.

Another method is to envision the future without the problem being present in your life. Just as with the golfer who envisions the outcome of the next shot previous to execution, you would be doing essentially the same thing with your life being absent of the problem. Please keep in mind, though, that this process takes some time and practice to be able to master. Once mastered, it can become a more automatic part of your routine problem-solving process. Here’s a summary of the process:

- Put your concern and attempts to solve a problem aside and relax your mind and body instead;
- Once a relaxed state is achieved, either **ALLOW** as many alternative solutions to enter your mind or imagine what your life would be like if the problem were not present.

A Brief Biographical Sketch

After an over 40 year career as a professional psychotherapist and Director of The Sports Stress Clinic in Amherst, NY, Charles Bonasera came to Florida and decided to use the benefits of his previous professional experiences in his new roles of Consultant in Life Management and Business Coaching as well as his expertise as a Motivational Speaker. He once again became involved with athletes in different sports training them with his techniques to help them develop and maintain focus as well as staying in their zone. Much of his training methods are derived from the CD collection he developed under the heading of WIN-WIN SECRETS as the President of Personal Identity Controls. This collection consists of thirty-six programs dealing with vital issues in the management of stress.

Another role that he adopted to add to his professional career was that of Author. Early in the 1980’s he wrote Guide to a Life Management Process which he has re-written as a workbook to successfully help people manage their stress which includes his own Working Model. As a result in his interest in golf and realizing that it was essentially a “mind game”, he wrote The Mental Side of Golf which can benefit the beginner as well as professionals playing the game of golf.

He then compiled over five-hundred sayings that he had developed in the course of his professional career as stimuli to help people change patterns in their lives entitled How to Stay Well and Live Life to the Fullest. This was followed by a book documenting case studies around disruptive life patterns including ways to change them under the name of How in the Hell Did This Happen to Me? Both his personal involvement in

sports as a participant, coach, manager and in his role in officiating, inspired him to write a primer for parents and coaches entitled The Legend of Little League.

Charles invites you to view his website at www.charlesmbonasera.com as well as to write with your comments and questions to his e-mail address (charles@charlesmbonasera.com). He would also be very happy to communicate with his readers by telephone should they desire. His professional motto is “seeking alternative methods to happiness” and wishes those touched by his words to practice the three secrets to a happy life: “enjoy life and enjoy it thoroughly ... develop and maintain a sense of humor ... bring as much love into your life as possible.