

Doctrine of the Easy

TECHNIQUE
MANAGEMENT
MENTAL
PHYSIOLOGY
EXCELLENCE
FUN

'Doctrine of the Easy' is a term used by Timothy Gallwey in his ground breaking book from the 1970s, "The Inner Game of Golf". He coins the phrase 'Self One' to represent the interference from the conscious mind - the negative inner chatter. He calls the subconscious mind Self Two, and that to play great golf he advocates that a player has to distract Self One and let Self Two play the game.

The perennial problem with golf is that the ball is stationary, so there is much time for Self One, the conscious mind, to defeat the player with negative inner chatter—i.e. doubts and fears. In other sports such as tennis, the ball is moving fast so to some extent there is less time to think consciously and the player then can instinctively react to the moving ball.

'Doctrine of the Easy' means the player should give the conscious mind a task to focus on, that it **perceives as relatively easy and stress free, during the execution phase.**

Let's take several scenarios. First of all you are on a tight driving hole, with trees on the left and water on the right. Your conscious mind may 'perceive' this as a difficult task for you to hit the ball onto the fairway. This 'difficult task' then leads to a little stress, which then leads to anxiety and tension, which then leads to a bad swing. The same situation often occurs on the green. You are left with a 1m downhill left to right putt and your mind again perceives this as a difficult task. The same chain reaction of events happens again....difficult task = stress = anxiety and tension and then a nervy stroke and a missed putt! So what's the solution? Well, using the concept of 'doctrine of the easy', the player needs to replace the 'difficult' task with a task that the mind perceives as 'easy'. So for instance on the tee shot it may be imagining the fairway is as wide as a driving range (how many people hit ugly duck hooks on the range—not many!), and then giving the conscious the mind the task of just concentrating on your routine (a non threatening easy task). With the putting example, again the key is to replace the difficult task with an easy one, so such as imagining you have a simple 'tap-in'. And then during the execution phase again just focusing on a simple non threatening task, such as perhaps 'striking the ball in the middle of the putter', or rolling the ball over a spot 15cm in front of the ball (again, a very simple task).

But this concept also applies to not just hitting the golf ball, but how you think about your golf game in general. From spending time with top Tour Players through our research and interview series, it has become abundantly clear to me that that one of the critical success keys of the top players is that they think in a way that **takes the pressure off themselves.**

Lesser players are often quite result orientated in their goals (such as I 'have to at least make the cut, or "I need to finish in the top 20 of my OOM etc". The top players rarely put pressure on themselves with these type of result orientated goals—instead they focus on more process orientated goals (such as improving my putting average, or getting the face more square at the top of the backswing, learning to stay in the present etc). This fits into this 'Doctrine of the Easy' concept, as now their minds are focused on something that does not create stress (or a win-lose situation), but if they progress with these process ambitions it will invariably lead to an improvement in performance.

"To play great golf you must control your conscious thoughts and give your subconscious mind simple clear instructions" Dr BEE EPSTEIN—SHEPERD 1996

Summary

Apply the 'Doctrine of the Easy' by;

- 1. Set yourself 'an easy task' for each shot you play, that is 'process related'**
- 2. For your golf game in general think in a way that takes the pressure off results—instead focus on making small easy manageable progress steps in developing your golf skills**

Interested to learn more about developing your success mentality so that you can become the player you aspire to be? Send an email to info@elitecoaching.com and we will email you our free 15 page GMAP questionnaire, and then we will give you a free of charge mental game analysis.

News around the Academy—2010 Tasmanian Open

Seven of our younger students have just returned from playing in the 2010 Tasmanian Open, held at the beautiful Kingston Beach course near Hobart. The course was beautifully presented and it's narrow fairways and very fast greens presented a formidable challenge. For some of the students it was the first time they had played in such a prestigious 72 hole international tournament. As always in Australian National tournaments the competition was fierce, and the depth and talent of Australia players in the amateur game justifies why they are such a dominant force in world golf at all levels.



In the practise days the students learnt how to develop a specific course strategy—identifying their target zones from the tee, making detailed maps of the green contours, and then getting the feel of the course.

In tournament week we educate the students it's important to not work on technique, but to develop a good trusting mentality in their technique, and to practise and polish their Pre Shot Routine. Lots of competitive practice on the short game and putting is important too, and players' must also learnt to prepare their confidence and concentration though a Mental Game Plan (MGP). To be a

great tournament player requires great tournament skills, and these are separate from technical skills.

It was enjoyable experience for all the players, and everyone gained some valuable learning experiences for the future. Three players made the 36 hole cut, with Edouard Amacher (18 years old, Switzerland) being the best placed player with a score of 284 (71-69-71-73) for a share of 10th place, which represents a personal best in international competition at this level—well done Ed!

The next tournament for our Australia students is the Riversdale Cup, in Melbourne at the beginning of march, and then after that the Australian Amateur Championship.



Join us for a trial training for one week!

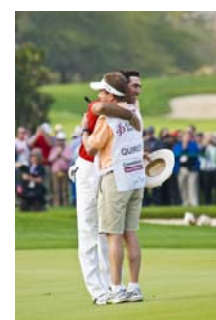
Interested in building your skills in order to make 2010 the year you dream it to be?

We are offering players the chance to join us for a **one week trial training**. Almost all calendar weeks are available, and students can then join one of our training weeks, Mon to Fri to see if they feel they can benefit from our holistic approach.

We have programs ranging from Tour professionals' to junior camps. The prerequisites we demand from potential players are just ambition, discipline and desire.



- Personalised and individual solutions based on performance coaching
- Multi cultural learning environment
- Emphasis on personal development and integrity
- Lifetime experience
- Professional Golf Diploma Program available—entry dates January and May each year



Interested in learning more about our Academy? Send an email to info@elitcoaching.com

