



A "SPECIAL" MANUAL

FOR

YOUR

BILLIARD

JOURNEY

STUDENT OF THE GAME... ...AND LIFE!!

Experiencing Complete Victory...

...Both "On And Off" The Table

As "students of the game...and life" we often search for silver bullets or special pills to cure things that are perceived as problems or interference. Self-effort to discover specific solutions can quickly come up empty handed. The good news is that there is a "perfect" remedy to what ails you...and your game. AND, it can be activated within you! This guaranteed "way to victory" both on and off the table is a "gift" to you – simply for the asking!!

This manual was written as a faith-driven blessing for those reading it. Please feel free to share the "victory message" within its pages with your fellow players, family, and friends. For a "free" copy in computer format (11.6MB Color – PDF only), please request it by email or phone. If you would like this manual in hardcopy format (8.5 x 11.0 inches, black / white, spiral binding), the cost is \$7.00 + S/H. All funds received will be used for outreach work under the RACK Vision umbrella. May you be blessed in your sharing and your giving!

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Special Note: A sincere thanks to my wife, Marty (Ms. Cue) for her heartfelt Christian love, plus her dedicated support and encouragement for finishing this instructional product.

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SPECIAL REFERENCE NOTE: Following are the versions of the Bible verses (in full or in part) that I used in this manual. I noted an “abbreviation” next to each verse: NAS (New American Standard Version); AMP (Amplified Version); ICB (International Children’s Bible); KJV (King James Version); NKJV (New King James Version).

“DR. CUE”[®] ARTICLE VICTORY THEMES / SPECIAL INCLUSIONS

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Victory Foreword

I have known Tom and Marty Rossman for nearly a decade. I have been a fan and patron of “Dr. Cue”[®] over the years, having seen nearly a half dozen exhibitions, and my law offices have proudly co-sponsored two shows over the past five years. We have corresponded, and have developed a treasured friendship. When Tom asked my permission to include certain of that correspondence in this “Instructional Manual,” I consented to his request, without hesitation. Thereafter, when he asked that I write this “Foreword” to the manual, I readily agreed.

Tom Rossman is one of America’s great pool ambassadors. A man of devout faith, Rossman has accumulated a number of world titles during his professional career. He is a former WPA World Artistic Pool Champion, as well as a former ESPN and World Masters Trick Shot Champion. Rossman has been instrumental in transforming what were formerly “trick shot” exhibitions and / or competitions to the established “Artistic Pool” genre it is today.

Beyond this, Rossman has a contagious exuberance for the billiard arts, in all its forms, and approaches all cue sports with the wonder and the enthusiasm of a child. He is both a student of the game as well as an articulate and valued instructor. His social media presence is ubiquitous, and he has produced over one hundred instructional video “shorts” for both the American Poolplayers Association (“APA”) as well as Cue Sports International (“CSI”). These “bite-size” lessons contain invaluable “nuggets” of wisdom that will elevate anyone’s level of play, from the novice to the professional player. This wealth of information can be found at www.youtube.com.

What you hold in your hands, too, is a wealth of information – a collection of essays from Rossman, and others, compiled over the years and presented with an eye toward imparting both “pool” and “life” lessons to the reader.

In both sport and in life, everyone wants to “win.” At the same time, one cannot “win” all the time. After all, our opponents’ desire to win, their level of dedication and skill, may be equal to or even exceed our own. How we approach competition and reconcile this definitional conflict is one of the topics Rossman addresses in the pages that follow.

How we deal with both “victory” and “defeat” is a reflection of our character, and Rossman addresses the question of character – how to comport one’s self as a “professional” in both sport and life – as an important and recurring theme. Rossman knows human nature, and addresses the topic of “winning with integrity” while at the same time learning to accept, and even celebrate, our opponents’ “victories,” even when it means we end up on the other side of the ledger. The message Rossman imparts goes beyond an encouragement to always “strive to perform to your very best” and “let the chips fall where they may.” No, it goes deeper than that.

Rossman explores the notion of our own duality: analytical and free-flowing, human and divine. The former is described in terms of the “left brain” (analytical) and the “right brain” (free-flowing). Rossman teaches the importance of maintaining harmony between the two, and gives us exercises designed to train our mind and body to perform at optimum levels. In the latter third of this work, Rossman broaches the subject of our divine nature, and encourages us to recognize the very gifts with which the Creator has endowed us. When we recognize this, we are obliged to honor God by performing to the best of our ability, utilizing the gifts with which we have been blessed. Rossman reminds us it truly is a beautiful world, and we can unleash our unlimited potential if we choose to acknowledge and accept the divine gifts God has bestowed upon us, utilize them to the best of our ability, and embrace the Holy Spirit that dwells within us because of God’s “ultimate gift” to us at Calvary!

It is an elegant, and uplifting message. Enjoy!

-- Stephen T. Saporta
January 26, 2016
Plainfield, Illinois

AUTHOR'S VICTORY COMMENTS / COACHING NOTES

After five decades of teaching our beautiful game, I have become a more focused “**student of the game and life,**” with a better understanding of what is required of a person to become the champion of his or her dreams. I have mentored thousands of players and talked to, or otherwise observed, hundreds of teachers around the world to hopefully acquire more instructional wisdom in the process. I have a personal motto: “always an open mind – always a learning experience,” which helps anyone (player or teacher) to grow. Here is a confirming message from the Bible: **Proverbs 9:9 (KJV)** – “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

The teaching techniques I used for years took on a new look about halfway through my knowledge-sharing and knowledge-learning journey, after watching the original Karate Kid movie with the unique “wax on – wax off” presentation style of “Mr. Miyagi.” I started to adopt his foundational principles / reasoning for conveying knowledge and, to the present day, I use what I call a “reverse teaching standard” that often defies logic, but has worked with amazing success. I am convinced if players could come to my home for 30 days to: 1) wax my car; 2) scrub my deck; and 3) paint my fence; they would acquire an enhanced game and the “heart of a champion” without hitting a pool ball while there. In the process, my car, deck, and fence would look great – **FUNNY, BUT TRUE!!**

This new training manual presents personally “selected” articles that I have written over the years for two industry publications: “VNEA News And Views” and “Professor Q-Ball’s National Pool & 3-Cushion News.” They include a multitude of instructional factors / topics that are designed for high value / quality results and cover a variety of “victory themes”: practice, perception, mental, heart, special game / life, and lighthearted. A spiritual connection – the “message of the Cross” – to one’s game and life journey is offered as the main cornerstone to help any player, regardless of skill, to experience complete and ultimate “victory” both on and off the table. Artistic Pool applications are often included to help you “enjoy the roll” even more!

The foundational base for this product includes, but is not limited to: Miyagi-style presentation principles; Olympic related game training concepts; “Dr. Cue”[®] player-friendly, simplified, and proven “mechanical / mathematical” instruction for practice, and corrective game techniques; mental definitions / development considerations; life transforming Biblical principles, special contributor inclusions, plus a look at the “humor of “Dr. Cue”[®] via show / clinic “cueisms” and “special” quips.

Introductory Teaching / Coaching Notes: Many people know about the roller coaster, yet very effective, stroke of Efren Reyes, making him one of the best, if not “the best” player in the modern day era of pool. It would seem that if a talented player like this uses such a stroke, then one should mimic Efren to achieve game excellence. This is illogical, since the error margins associated with such a stroke are obvious to the eye; however, Efren and many of his fellow Philippine players have spent countless hours a day on the table to perfect such extreme motions. Other top players at pro and amateur levels have specific mechanical traits that work for them as well, but are often hard to convey to inquiring minds in a simple application manner. Strategy and terminology are other factors that are understood within the minds of those players that appear to have a good grasp of them, but to players that struggle or are new to the game, confusion often ensues when specific knowledge is exchanged in a coaching / student scenario. Consequently, it is absolutely essential to break down undefined, misunderstood, complicated, or unpracticed items to simple, crystal clear, non - debatable, and error free points of understanding to avoid over-teaching. This is especially true when coaching is applied to team environments, since disharmony often occurs when everyone is not on the same page, so to speak. To guarantee productive sessions of practice, open communications are essential so that all players speak the same “game language” – in order to unify player hearts and assure team bonding.

Final Note: I continue to teach via clinic workshops and “open forums” around the world, plus via online sources. For all product / teaching / life information, please email me or visit my websites:

Email: drcue@artisticpool.org **Websites:** www.drcuepromotions.com / www.artisticpool.org

And now...Rack Up A Victory In Your Game And Life!!!

Tom “Dr. Cue”[®] Rossman

PRACTICE ORIENTED THEMES (3 ARTICLES)

April 2, 2003

A SECRET OF SORTS – TO REFLECT ON!

“Ms. Cue” and I have experienced thousands of treasured moments in and out of the “artistic pool” arena. We hope each of you is enjoying personal “victory” in your game and life. In this regard, I want to give you of a “secret of sorts” for the next level and beyond!

!@#%^&*()_+ ... Something is definitely wrong!!
L@o\$^k*S)h+arp ... Better, but still not right!!
Lo#ok^Sh(ar+p ... Warmer – keep trying!!
Look%^Sharp ... You’re almost there!!
Look Sharp!! ... Now, you’ve got it!!

The above chameleon (changing) text holds within its pattern special meaning to correct specific “glitches” in a player’s mechanical movements...before, during, and after a shot. The foundation of this analogy is based on an “in the present” mode, as I type each line, and then review it. Making the appropriate changes as I go, from line to line, is a necessity to eventually get the last line to “**look sharp**”!!

In a similar light, you can enter an “in the present” training mode to your game components. An instructor’s analysis/diagnosis of a student has minimal value, if some method of corrective remedy is not prescribed for an existing glitch or glitches. Pre-stance, chalking efficiency, alignment, stroke, and/or the obvious errant movements of grip, bridge, head, and other body parts can all cause a player to play poorly and look dull. Many of the games we lose are the direct result of not “**looking sharp**” at the table...in our preparation and execution skills.

The “secret” – a mirror!!! How simple!!! The process of “prepping yourself” to “**look sharp**” occurs each morning for most of us. If something looks dull or out of place, you correct it “in the present”...with a trustworthy feedback from within the mirror’s reflection.

Imagine looking in a mirror seeing yourself step erratically into a contorted body/stance position, swinging the cue in a wild twisting hand/wrist/arm movement, “pumping oil” with the lower arm in relation to the upper shoulder hinge, and/or jumping mightily up from a final stroke movement with your head or upper body. You can correct any “glitch” of “muscle memory” / “pre-stance” by talking to yourself in the mirror, until the correction is made with comfort in a reinforced subconscious image implant. Tuning yourself to “look sharp” in a mirror with each mechanical component in its proper order and movement, will allow you to take the “new you in the mirror” to the table.

Prescription from “Dr. Cue”[®]:

1 to 2 minutes a day “in the present”...with a mirror...for 3 to 5 days, and then every 3000 games or 3000 miles, whichever comes first!! Chalk consistently on each approach...align body with cue under shoulder...step forward into down stance position, maintaining the cue / shoulder relationship...balance yourself with a “parallel to the cue” rear foot movement...start swinging the cue in a non-twisting and unrestricted motion of the hand / wrist / lower arm, with no upper shoulder / body / head movement...make a final “slow” back swing, hesitate slightly, and “free flight” the cue forward to the awaiting tip in the mirror.

Focused Objective / Goal:

Straight alignment and straight stroke motions...under the shoulder...with “2 tips” imaged in a gentle and unified perfection to each other.

Result: A new, improved you -- “Look Sharp...Be Sharp...Feel Sharp”!!

September 15, 2007

MAY YOUR CUP RUNNETH OVER!

In January of 2008 players will display their “artistic” talents / competitive spirits at the inaugural “Dr. Cue”[®] Classic “Artistic” Cup. There will be an assortment of overall positional / discipline awards, plus sportsmanship recipient presentations. Each player will shoot forty (40) shots/challenges (five per each of eight disciplines). Players will discover the joy of competing with a host of great Artistic Pool Playing Artists, and the camaraderie of shared cue sport experiences both on and off the table will create memories that will last a lifetime for players and fans alike.

In preparation for...and during...this special event I encourage each player to keep in mind their developmental pool skills with a consistent pre-shot routine, a straight alignment process, a balanced stance at the table, and a fluent, relaxed stroke on the final swing. The emotional release to each shot attempt and hopeful success should be one of determined acceptance and a gracious attitude.

A helpful hint for event success is to apply the three basic “adjustment” factors to any shot/challenge, whether it be “artistic” in nature, or as it relates to the general pool disciplines that players might encounter in their journey to billiard excellence. The first factor of adjustment is the “angle” to a given shot. This is determined by a change of cue ball positioning from shot to shot when the cue ball is in hand. Adjusting the “angle” of the cue ball slightly left or right in relation to the object ball or multiple ball setups often produces pleasant and desirable results. In the world of Artistic Pool, a very small angle adjustment for the “throw allowance” in a multiple ball set up is often all it takes for shot success.

The second adjustment of “speed” oftentimes determines a focused goal. Learning the personality of the table by testing the slow, medium, and fast speed for your stroke on a particular cloth is vital before play begins. Shooting the cue ball one, two, or three table lengths to a zone can “lock in” the “speed” of the table to your mental image banks. “Listening” to the cue tip contact on the cue ball can implant an audio enhancer to your ear/mind that can easily be called upon when striking the cue ball on subsequent attempts. Keep in mind that more speed causes more cushion compression and results in shorter rebound angles for both the cue ball and object ball(s).

The third factor of adjustment is the least favorable and most inconsistent. It is most often used for the “artistic” disciplines due to the nature of the shot requirements. This variable is “english” or “side spin” and can also relate to using excessive follow or extreme draw outside the normal range of regular play. I remember Willie Mosconi suggesting that “english” (reference to side spin application) be used only if you have to. The “vertical” applications of spin are always best if a player can “make a desired” hit using them. In Artistic Pool a player must practice more due to the side spin applications required of the shots and must refine the fundamental components of hitting where he or she aims on the cue ball. The cueing effects of “squirt,” “curve,” and “english transfer” can cause added disappointment, unless extra hours of practice are applied to the pure mechanics necessary to make them work.

So, there it is – Angle...Speed...English!! When the choice is in your corner on which to use, try them in order and you will probably see greater victory in your game and/or shot executions. When you have no choice, as in some “forced” situations of regular play or in many of the Artistic Pool challenges, use the one that you feel will give you the best opportunity of success. May each of you let your “regular play cup” runneth over with this knowledge, and may those cueing artists competing in the January event let your Artistic Pool cup” runneth over with joy!

PRACTICE WITH DISCIPLINE FOR CONFIDENCE IN YOUR GAME!

Throughout this instructional manual, I often make reference to the left brain and the right brain, and how each should function in harmony, one with the other. The left brain is analytical by nature, while the right brain is free flowing. See also, page 46.

I want to suggest some excellent “practice” for you before your next event. This “discipline” of special development will help make your overall goals for game excellence faster to attain. The primary focus for this practice regimen is on “right brain” training and the confidence building result of a “free flight” stroke. I find this approach the “best” way to develop a “straight” arm swing and keep the “left brain” from “steering the cue” on its way to an intended target. Doing “right brain” exercises first will assure that when you do the “analytical” part of your game later, you can count on the “right brain” doing its part without “thinking about it.”

I believe the following practice regimen has taken me to the top of my game, even at the ripe “young at heart” age of 59. I have experienced its benefit in every competitive event I have played in over the last four years, plus in many personal record breaking efforts at various “wing shot” and “speed shooting” specialties.

My “disciplined” practice regimen (seven days minimum in a row prior to event) consists of:

- (A) Running a full rack of balls – any order without missing and randomly placed on table in “spread” fashion;
- (B) Banking fifteen (15) balls (four cross-corner to my left, four cross-side to my right, four cross-side to my left, and three cross-corner to my right) – balls on long center line of table about two to three inches apart, with cue ball in hand on each bank – no missing allowed; and
- (C) Shooting wing shots until fifteen (15) are made in a row – chalk is placed on foot spot; cue ball and object ball both physically in hand with object ball rolled toward “open area” side of chalk cube – cue ball is shot from behind head string to moving ball. Ball must go between chalk and end cushion for a corner pocket make. Chalk may be hit when shot is over.

ABC practice points above should be done in order with good mechanics, plus with the best rhythm and fluency possible. I recommend you start with fewer balls or “goals” on each challenge and increase the number as success and results are achieved. For example, you may want to start with running half a rack, banking 4 banks (1 each way), and then making 2 wing shots in a row. Establish what works best for you and then challenge yourself to the next level and beyond.

Another “bonus” and disciplined exercise for me is to shoot the cue ball at lag speed. Start anywhere behind the head string with the cue ball and shoot it two table length’s speed until you are able to return within three inches of the exact position you started from. Do this with your eyes open and a firm bridge (closed or open). “Listen” to the “tip contact” each time you perform this routine. “Lock in” or “memorize” the “sound of the hit” and do at least five times in a row with success. You will find a special trust in your “audio memory banks” that provides the best way to “get in touch” with the attempted shot speed. Then, close your eyes and try the shot again with the “conditioned” recall of what the sound was when you did the shot properly. You will be surprised at how consistent your game will become when you start this unique exercise. Drop me an email with the “good news” of your “new game” – drcue@artisticpool.org!!

LOOK AND LISTEN!

ENJOY THE ROLL!

RACK UP A VICTORY!

PERCEPTION BASED THEMES (3 ARTICLES)

February 24, 2010

A SHOT IS A SHOT...IS A SHOT...IS A SHOT!

The perspective of how difficult a shot is and how a player approaches it often lies in prior episodes of success or failure to similar challenges. Some players surrender to the shot and appear to hit a ball hard and hope a pocket gets in the way, while others take a more technical route, providing a more tried and true remedy for victory. Over the years, I have heard numerous opposing views on specific shots; therefore, I would like to list a few “Dr. Cueisms” that you might keep in mind, which will ultimately help you attain greater satisfaction for the shot objective in mind.

- First and foremost, it is paramount to implant a very positive affirmation in one’s mind before any shot is taken. In 1985, I returned to the game after a one-year hiatus. The first thing I did was to convince myself that every shot in pool was my favorite shot, regardless of the analytical impression normally perceived of some shots. I did this by mentally repeating to myself before every shot that it was my favorite shot, and that I would execute it with a positive attitude and conviction of heart. Every shot was just another shot with balls rolling and making a gentle and joyful click in the process. I have practiced this favorite shot principle in my brain over and over again for over 25 years now, and to such an extent that shots, which would otherwise make no sense or suggest success, have become shots that I look forward to. Expecting a “joy from the shot” is a wonderful “key of success” for me.
- The second principle to shot success is to know that every “straight” shot should be a straight shot, and that every “crooked” shot is a crooked shot. I am not referring here to a “straight in shot” versus a “cut shot,” but rather the “straight swing” nature of the cue in that whatever plane the cue starts on, it should indeed finish on that same plane. In other words, no dipping / diving and no twisting / turning of the natural rotor motions of the wrist / arm should exist which might cause a distorted cue movement through the cue ball. This principle holds true for level, jump, or masse plane shots. Remember to shoot the cue down a straight line and let the cue ball get in the way of the tip and let the object ball get in the way of the cue ball. Focus on the concept of “straight alignment” and “straight stroke” in 100% focus mode and the cue stick will “flow straight” for consistent shot success!!
- A final perception to work on is that every long shot is a short shot in disguise. A dedicated time of “practice” walking back from the table about 5 – 10 feet to view what you have always thought of as a “long shot” will produce wonders for your mental approach to shots of this type. I have discovered that taking this “long distance” approach often makes every long shot seem short and makes short shots even shorter.

Practice these mental / physical exercises and watch your game go the next level and beyond.

Enjoy the roll, always!!

November 1, 2014

THE PERCEPTION OF WINNING!

“Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder” (Plato) reflects on a myriad of perceptions about what beauty really is – more than skin deep (internal); less than skin deep (external); a mixture of both; or neither! The same goes for “winning” – I believe **winning lies in the perception of the player**. Many look at winning with the literal goal of beating an opponent in a match and moving forward to the next round in an effort to win again. On the other side of the equation I have seen some players go home after losing two matches with a big smile. These extremes of perception seem odd at first, but have a foundation of reason based once again on the player’s viewpoint.

I believe Willie Mosconi presents a unique perception of winning. He garnered 15 world championship titles and ran 526 balls in a special exhibition match – all prior to 1961 when The Hustler movie was released. Willie played a cameo role with Newman and Gleason and was the technical advisor. Winning for Willie took on many faces during his illustrious career – the prestigious world titles earned, an exhibition record high run, and a personal connection to one of the greatest billiard movies of all time. I found it very interesting that the “winning” aspect Willie was able to experience in The Hustler had more to do with being in the presence of two of the most famous actors ever as opposed to a demonstration of his undeniable table skills.

Familiar images and / or results programmed over many years can form a mental acceptance of perceived good or **the thing to do**. For example, people drive on the “left” side of the road in England. There is a foundation why this is done; however, the simplest non-analytical reason is that it is the “right” thing to do. In the U.S. we drive on the “right” side of the road both literally and figuratively; however, in my “Dr. Cue”[®] style of humor, I believe we drive where we do, because it’s all that’s “left,” since the English are using the other side. People in England believe they are correct, and people in the U.S. believe we are correct due to programmed actions taken for years and the many images engrained in respective minds both on and off the road.

The Harlem Globetrotters and the “Table Trotter” style of “Dr. Cue”[®] are similar as both present a fair share of “missed shots” via respective career journeys in order to entertain those watching. Years of “programmed misses with humorous actions” have become “makes in disguise” and / or the “thing to do” on the court and / or pool table. Contrary to standard professional basketball / pool this unusual style of performance presents a “winning” way, so to speak.

In one of my former articles I wrote about a special motto of “game and life” that I adopted many years ago: 1) to “win” is great, 2) to “play” is greater, and 3) to “love” is the greatest. The perception of #1 is one of “winning” in a literal sense, but is often illusive; the perception of #2 reflects a close tie to “winning” when playing is not physically possible; the perception of #3 becomes the ultimate “winning” experience when the “sight and sound” of “game and life” encounters engrain a special “joy” only the heart can perceive! May you realize and / or continue an accepted and joyful **perception of winning**.

Personal Note: I know many players who have a hard time dealing with **defeat**. They may own a 50% win-loss record (on paper) for the majority of their pool-playing careers. They perceive “losing” (not “winning”) half of the matches played; consequently, they become discouraged at the prospect. Once players change their **primary focus** from a half-empty glass (losing) to a half-full glass (winning), their mental perception reverses course, and they are “encouraged” in the process!! Stephen Saporta, a valued contributor to this manual, reminds me that even major league baseball hitters with a .300 batting average are considered for the Hall of Fame!!

Note: See Stephen Saporta commentaries (pages 36 – 41) and special article (Pages 56 – 59)!

March 1, 2015

GAME PROBLEMS NOT REALLY PROBLEMS!

After 5 decades of teaching pool I have come to the conclusion that many players have a difficult time letting go of the problems they “perceive” in the game. Recently I had a student struggling with shooting an object ball that was 4 – 5 feet distance from the end cushion and about 1-foot distance from the side cushion. The cue ball was almost frozen to the end cushion and in a straight line with the object ball toward the corner pocket. The player had shot (and missed) this challenge so many times that a major stumbling block to a successful game had developed.

When I moved the cue ball closer to the object ball at a distance between them of about 6 inches, I challenged the student to shoot the shot. The student reminded me the new position was not a problem and moved the cue ball back to the original **near cushion position**. In other words, a “return to the perceived problem” became a quick response in my attempt to get things fixed. Once again I moved the cue ball closer in to refocus the player’s attention on a shot they told me they could make without a problem. After playing ping pong with the cue ball a few times, it looked like the only way I could get the student to shoot the shot from the closer cue ball position was to bribe them with food, a drink, or some other incentive.

Eventually, I was able to get the student to shoot the closer cue ball position shot 10 times with a 90% make rate. The student gently reminded me that they had told me this “elementary” shot to them was not the problem, but rather only when the cue ball was near the cushion. I moved the cue ball to a position 2 inches farther away from the object ball (closer to the end cushion), but I could see a look of disappointment by the student in my remedy for their problem. They persisted in going back to the cue ball positioning area near the cushion in the hope of finding a silver bullet or miracle pill to fix everything, instead of realizing that my instructional technique might just be the answer they were looking for.

After considerable effort on my part, I got the student to shoot the shot from my designated cue ball positions. At each point a 90% make rate became a thing of beauty and joy forever (Keats) for the player. Finally, the student was able to shoot the shot with a high percentage make rate when the cue ball was almost frozen to the end cushion. A quizzical look by the student and a quick quip by them that they thought they had a problem with the end cushion cue ball position shot was just what “the doctor ordered.” I reminded the student they “thought they had a problem” instead of seeing a simple **solution in disguise**.

If you are holding on to your “perceived problems” too tightly, look for “simple solutions in disguise” as the illustration in this article demonstrates. May your literal misses become **safeties and / or makes in disguise!** May your actual game losses become **wins in disguise!** And, may the difficult moments in your life be **stepping stones in disguise** to a brighter day ahead!!!

MENTAL PROCESS THEMES (5 ARTICLES)

March 28, 2005

WHEN IS A “MISS” NOT A “MISS”? – PROFESSIONAL VS. AMATEUR!

The mental aspects of this game play a vital role in playing well, so I would like to confirm why shots get missed when we attempt to impact the cue ball. The best way to describe this is to relate to an obvious fact of life – **Pros don't miss as much as amateurs.** Once you understand why this happens, you will have a better grasp of how to practice, assuming basic game mechanics are taken care of first.

In the “eye of a pro” an object ball goes into a specific pocket over and over again, establishing a calculated measure of success. The pro player does an analytical (left-brain) acceptance of each shot with the eyes seeing the ball drop, the ears hearing the ball drop, and an overall feeling of the ball dropping by the touch sensations of the cue in its striking / balance movements.

While this left-brain analysis normally makes the player content with the result, the right brain simply goes along for the ride, absorbing the scene unfolding on the table in front of it...shot after shot, day after day, year after year. The key here is that the right brain does not analyze the situation like the left-brain – It simply accepts whatever we implant to it repetitiously. In the case of a pro, the right brain agrees with the “make,” since that is what happens time after time. The conclusion of this scenario is that both parts of the brain are in harmony to each other...with the left brain analyzing the “make” and the right brain agreeing this is OK because that is all it normally sees.

In the eye of the amateur, an object ball “misses” a specific pocket over and over again, establishing a calculated measure of failure. The amateur does an analytical (left-brain) observation of the “miss” via the same feedback criteria the pro uses (eyes, ears, and touch), and many times expresses dismay of something going wrong.

Now comes the interesting and almost diabolical twist the “right brain” puts on this situation. The right brain absorbs a repetitious implant of the “miss,” but does not see it as that!! In other words, the right brain sees this miss “in disguise” time after time in a conditioned action for a specific shot, and begins to think it must be OK to “not make” a specific shot, since that is what it absorbs over and over again. The right brain simply accepts what you program into it.

Note: Remember years ago, when the “subliminal” messages of “popcorn promotions” were put on the movie theatre screens. The left brain could not see them, but the right brain could pick them up in the “nanosecond” timings that they were placed on the screen. All of a sudden you were getting hungry for popcorn for what appeared to be no reason at all, since you just had a huge dinner right before the movie. The right brain absorbed these impulses and got hungry. No amount of left-brain analysis will prevent you from buying that \$5.00 bag of popcorn, unless of course the \$10.00 movie left your wallet empty to begin with. In relation to pool, the right brain gets hungry for a miss, scratch, or some positional error, and we seem more than happy to satisfy the need...due to years of implanting the wrong kind of right-brain messages.

The amateur has a “disharmony” going on between the left brain...saying the “miss” is wrong, and the right brain...saying it must be OK, since that is what it sees most of the time. This inner mental “battle” goes on and normally the right brain wins out. Therefore, the only way to “deprogram” the right brain from “thinking the miss is OK” is to shorten the distance for a specific shot to a position where you can do a 90% make rate implant (9 out of 10 makes). Move the cue ball farther back in 2-inch increments and continue the 90% make rate pace at each new position.

Eventually, the right brain will absorb a “correction” to the former trouble shot via this high percentage make process. It will come “into harmony” with the left-brain analysis session for a respective shot, just as the pros have been doing for years. In summation, “harmony” is the key mentally. Deprogram those “misses” and let the games begin!!

July 15, 2009

BURNING FOCUS – SNEAK ATTACK OF THE RIGHT BRAIN!

My wife, Marty (“Ms. Cue”) and I have been on the road now for over twenty-five (25) years doing clinics, shows, and an assortment of promotional events for our sport. As you might expect, the demanding logistics and performance of our tour schedule require significant planning / disciplined focus. The principle of **burning focus** is essential for success for your game. Without it concentration is lost or never obtained, and failure normally lurks around the corner to steal away your personal joy of a game well played!! Therefore, I would like to provide you with a “special” technique to acquire **focus** when one might appear to be in limbo.

First of all, I would like to give you a brief test of **focus**, so that you might better understand how it is controlled...and found/absorbed...when you feel like you are wandering aimlessly from shot to shot. Pick any object of any size. Please view it in its entirety with both eyes open. Then reduce your view / **focus** to a part of the item. Reduce again to a specific point on the item. Imagine a fly sitting on that point and ultimately a “spec” of lint on the wing of the fly. Finally, imagine the “spec of lint” smoking!! While you are **burning your focus** on the lint...on the wing of the fly, try to **burn your focus** on another fly’s wing right next to it. You will find this is impossible!! The left-brain function is visually **burning the focus** on ONE detailed / specific point. It can’t do two **burning focus points** at the same time. The **focus** will always be split if you try to do both...back and forth...back and forth.

The brain, you might have heard, is comprised of a left side (analytical) and a right side (global) separation. To put this in pool jargon, the left side analyzes things in a game...point-by-point and in a point-to-point manner. If we are not free flowing our stroke, we are steering it with our left-brain function in a calculated and “trying to make it happen” method. This is inconsistent with how most pros and fluent stroking players execute their stroke. They use their right-brain function in a graceful, artful, and musically “let it go” technique.

How does one develop this right-side brain (global) tempo and fluency? It is fairly easy. Follow along!! First of all...before your last slow, backward stroke, hesitate at the cue ball with you cue tip. **Burn your focus** on the lint on the wing of the fly, or for you pool players...the contact point of the object ball. NOTE: Use a magnifying glass, penetrating, and laser-beamed **focus** on this point. Now, the left-brain function is being kept busy!! It is time for what I call the “sneak attack of the right brain” function – a beautiful, uninhibited, free-flowing final stroke to victory. The stroke cannot be steered with the left brain because it is 100% busy **burning its focus** on the contact point. The only thing that can stroke the shot is the right brain, which does so automatically without the left brain getting in the way.

Slow backstroke...hesitate again...continue to **burn the focus**...and, let your cue go!!! The shot will shoot itself, so to speak and you will often enter the golden arena of dead stroke. You can practice this **burning focus** technique from large to ultra small while in your chair as well.

Watch your focus come alive – It really works!!

Follow-up Example – It is common knowledge that when a basketball free throw shooter is at the line, the opposing fans in the stands are trying to distract the player by waving hands, shouting, etc. This often acts as a trigger for the player to focus harder on the rim or whatever focal point is chosen. This keeps the left brain engaged at a maximum level, thereby allowing the right brain to free flight the ball through the hoop automatically at a high percentage make-rate. I believe if the fans would simply get quiet in every way, they would get what they want – more errant shots because the free throw shooter does not witness anything to establish the focus at 100%. I often play better when things are noisy, distracting, etc. because I know I **MUST** focus at the highest level.

September 1, 2014

KEEPING YOUR GAME SIMPLE!

The physical side of the “stroke” is really pretty simple in theory – 1) a cue stick should start directly under the shoulder and 2) a cue stick should maintain a straight “free flight” swing through the cue ball. The reality of this process is dependant on dozens of mechanical and mental elements coming together in the right order at the right time. Often a perceived “glitch” in your mechanics turns into a lingering point of focus. Then, thinking about what is wrong and how to correct it becomes another “point of focus” and so the story goes.

Eventually a player’s focus is split in several directions causing a dreaded “paralysis of analysis” between the ears. The mind cannot focus at a 100% level on “more than one item” at the same time. Too many items of analysis produce “split focus” – a percentage on this, another percentage on that, and still another percentage on something else, leading to confusion and in most cases, the end to a beautiful billiard performance.

In order to address this dilemma one must clear the clutter of “split focus” from the mind. Taking a brief journey mentally to a more serene place where no controversy exists and logic follows can do this. Two simple “roots of TRUST” that have not changed in nearly 5 centuries of billiard play appear initially to be humorous, but are candidly effective to “keeping your game simple” – 1) a pool ball “rolls” because it is round, 2) a pool ball “drops” in a pocket because of gravity.

Doing a simple 2 - step mental exercise for these items can produce wonders in your game – A) lock in 100% focus and acceptance to #1 and B) lock in 100% focus and acceptance to #2. Repeat process and repeat again – without question and totally logical – developing TRUST and renewing a foundation of mental confidence and calm!!

Now that the mind is at peace, so to speak, take a deep breath and imagine two “additional” items of simplicity in order – 1) a “plumb bob” hanging straight down under your shoulder, and 2) an “arrow” in straight flight being released by your back hand – without interference. The first image converts automatically to your cue stick starting directly under your shoulder as you align for the shot, and the second image automatically converts to your cue moving straight to the target in a free flight release action.

Repeat the following “trigger line” internally 3 times before each game and 1 time before each shot – “plumb bob” straight under shoulder and “arrow” in straight flight release!! The process to keep your game simple takes only a few minutes to do. May you continue to “enjoy the roll”!!

Bonus Nugget Of Instruction – When it comes to keeping your game simple, the lag shot is one of the best ways to program superior speed control. The process is easy to do! Pick a specific point in the kitchen area of the table and lag a ball from there, down the total table length, and back to the head cushion. Once you do this several times from the same starting point, and you are happy with the results of your efforts, do the shot 5 more times, and listen (left brain) to the sound of the cue tip hitting the ball. When the result is good, the tip makes a specific sound attached to that “good result”. With repetition, the right brain locks in the “good result sound.” Then, line up for another lag, close your eyes, and imagine the right brain releasing the engrained “good result sound” – out of the brain via a myriad of nerves / passageways, continuing its travel into the arm, the wrist, the hand, the cue, and “out of the tip”. Hit the ball and you will be amazed at how well you can “lag by sound.” Since the right brain knows the desired sound before you hit the ball, your trust level is high! Every shot you shoot in pool with good results has an engrained sound in the right brain. Therefore, use this “good result sound” process with both eyes open for focus (page 13 article) and watch your speed control, position, and make-rate success improve!

July 1, 2015

15 SECONDS TO VICTORY!

The “key” to a great game is applying 100% “burning focus” to a myriad of mental, mechanical, mathematical, and “heart based” elements coming together in the right order at the right time. When we perceive a “game glitch” of any type, a small percentage of the aforementioned 100% (housed in the left brain) turns into a lingering and unwelcome “point of debate.” Often we try to figure out and / or analyze what is wrong using a small percentage, let’s say, 10% of the 100%; This “giving up” of a portion of the 100% “burning focus” leaves 90% to somehow do what is necessary to “keep the left brain” active while our right brain strives to “free slight” a perfect stroke.

The 10% is not able to determine how to figure out the problem, let alone fix it in the heat of battle. A dilemma for the 10% ensues, as it goes back to the “90% mother ship” and asks for help. Another 10% is given up leaving 80% to do the “burning focus” routine. Each of the 10% factors seem to argue over what is wrong and how to fix it, creating the need to go back again and again to the main percentage bank to get help. Our game seems to spiral out of control as our focus is split in multiple directions causing a dreaded “paralysis of analysis” between the ears. Too many items of analysis have produced “split focus” – a percentage on this, another percentage on that, and still another percentage on something else, leading to confusion and in most cases, the end to a beautiful billiard performance.

The left brain automatically takes a hiatus from its assigned role of 100% burning focus and continues to “debate” what is wrong until the match is over, unless we do something to “get back on track” in a quick, logical, and serene manner. We must clear the clutter of “split focus” from the mind. To do this I suggest taking your position in the chair with an expectant hope that all will be just fine. In just fifteen (15) seconds a player can use four “non-debatable” mental images that will put any broken game back together again. The following four items are simple and logical, plus they are accurate, without question or debate: 1) a pool ball “rolls” because it is round, 2) a pool ball bounces off a cushion because of rubber, 3) a pool ball “drops” in a pocket because of gravity, and 4) a pocket does not move, being securely fixed in position.

Doing a simple three - step mental exercise for these items can produce wonders in your game:

- (A) Close your eyes and visualize a ball rolling, bouncing off a cushion, and dropping in a pocket that does not move;
- (B) Open your eyes momentarily and repeat “A” process; and
- (C) Open your eyes again and repeat “A” process one more time – renewing a foundation of mental confidence and calm – ready to approach the table with 100% burning focus once again, without debate.

Each “A” process takes a maximum of five seconds to do, so may each of you utilize “15 seconds to victory” as needed for game success!

October 27, 2015

MAKING “SENSE” OF IT ALL!

Pool can sometimes be a frustrating roller coaster of literal makes and misses, which can lead to self doubt for the person that continues to roll those little round spheres across the table surface. An endless search to “make sense of it all” ensues. Never fear – there is hope for total victory in the journey.

When a ball is literally made, the 5 left-brain senses go into action! One can “see and hear” a ball drop in the pocket, and one can often “feel the shot” being executed properly – through the cue, so to speak. A total environment might also include the “smells and tastes” for the shot at hand as the person playing attaches to specific stimuli that heighten these latter senses in a good way. The 5 right-brain senses go along for the ride; thereby, experiencing ball after ball being made, which creates a mental harmony between the left and right brain.

When a ball is literally missed, the left-brain senses attached to the shot do not “enjoy the roll” in a positive way and the right-brain senses experience a different scenario for the end result of the pool shot. If a “wrong” result is replicated often, the right brain will perceive it as the right thing to do, even when the left brain debates the issue. The left brain and right brain are no longer in harmony with each other and cannot work in a unified manner for game success.

To fix this mental disconnect between the left and right brain, I suggest a simple, yet very effective practice discipline. Place fifteen (15) object balls on the table in a random fashion with each ball separated from every other ball and remove the cue ball from the table. Pick any ball and shoot it into any pocket that is free and clear for the shot to be made. It is very important to focus on an easy shot every time, shooting down a straight line every time, and allowing the left brain to absorb each ball rolling straight toward the pocket with a subsequent drop / make – every time! Repeat this 15 ball exercise a minimum of ten (10) times in a day for two days. Then, do two more days with cue ball in hand for each shot; in other words, create a short, straight in shot each time to a pocket that you can be assured of making the object ball every time.

Six hundred (600) balls later – three hundred (300) without a cue ball and three hundred (300) with a cue ball) – you will have programmed perfect muscle memory for a straight stroke; the left brain will be very happy with each ball dropping; and the right brain will “go along for the ride” witnessing six hundred (600) balls being made literally – **HARMONY RESTORED**, and **making “sense” of it all!!**

Follow Up Note: During a tour instructional clinic I was doing in 2014, I explained this 15-ball exercise, but told those present to do 1,000 balls without a cue ball and 1,000 balls with a cue ball. A student of the game in attendance heard the presentation and decided to apply the logical and simplistic process in an effort to take his game to the next level and beyond. VICTORY!!!

Testimonial To This Practice Topic / Theme (Response From Marvin Butler 7/16/14 4:20AM):

HOW ARE YOU DOING MR. ROSSMAN? I DID THE ONE THOUSAND BALLS 4 TIMES SINCE BEING BACK HOME TO SAY: “I’VE WON 3 OF THE LAST 4 TOURNAMENTS I’VE PLAYED IN AND FINISHED IN THE TOP 3 IN ALL OF THEM”!

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!

Congratulations, Marvin! Thanks for sharing your “victory” story! May God bless you and your family as well!

-- “Dr. Cue”[®] and “Ms. Cue”

HEART ASSOCIATED THEMES (8 ARTICLES)

July 3, 2003

A TIME FOR REFLECTION!

Now, it is time to do another diagnosis/review process – one of “**internal reflection**” to the total learning experience from these competitions. I suggest that each of you “reflect” on your performance with some key “enhancers” to overall improvement...for future growth in your personal journey to billiard excellence. I believe the single most important factor is one of realizing that this is just one more “step”...along the way, one more “piece”...of the puzzle, or one more “brick”...in the wall.

Is your walk finding its “straight line” to success, regardless of the paper score? Is your picture of the game enhanced from your past experience, as each part connects to another? And, is your “house” of dedication and passion for the game getting stronger, creating a solid mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual foundation?

Nothing is instant in our sport, even though sometimes players approach it as such. Therefore, a second factor of “reflection” is one of how the heart perceives the “why” or “purpose” of playing. Do you play for a financial gain? Do you play for the title? Do you play to share time, space, and precious moments with others? Do you play, just because you enjoy playing?

After playing for over 50 years now, I have discovered that the final tally of “who wins more money or who has more titles” is secondary to “**sharing with others and the heartfelt joy of playing the game for the beauty of the game.**” This final “reflection” will give each of you a personal victory that is impossible to measure.

So, relax, share, enjoy, and Rack Up A Victory in your game and life!!

Special Statement By Special Friends:

Jim & Bonnie Parker (Illinois Billiard Club) Statement Dated 1/20/15:

“When played at the right place, at the right time, and with the right people, billiards is indeed everyone’s game.”

Thank you, Jim and Bonnie! This is a treasured contribution for the foundational “joy” our beautiful game can provide! Blessings to you, always!

-- “Dr. Cue”[®] and “Ms. Cue”

April 21, 2010

GIVING BACK TO THE SPORT WE LOVE!

My hair continues to grow silver gray with wonderful memories and a continuing passion for the sport of billiards in all its forms – pocket (regular and artistic disciplines), carom (mainly 3-Cushion), and snooker (when the occasion arises). Since the summer of 1985 my primary observation and heartfelt “victories” have been on the amazing “sight and sound” attached to the beauty, promise, and vision of each roll regardless of the final paper score!!

I now realize that the true joy of receiving of any title, trophy, and / or monetary award lies in the sharing of these special gifts with those who often run the good race, but never enter the winner’s circle. “Ms. Cue” and I have seen this “giving back” or “channeling of blessing” in action by players at all levels, faithful fans of our sport, special media resources, sponsor contributors, and many others.

Some share their time! Some share their talent! Some share their products and/or select services! Some even share their finances! And, in the sharing, comes a “return” that often can’t be measured – to the heart of the person giving and to the sport as a primary benefactor. **The more we give, the more our sport and the hearts within it benefit.**

As many of you may know 3-Cushion Billiards is my favorite game. Recently the USBA board took initiatives to promote their own tour with a series of grass roots carom events leading up to the USBA Nationals. A special contributor outreach was done among the players and fans of 3-Cushion asking for ANY donation they could make to help out. Time, talent, products, select services, and any financial contributions were requested and were received in a variety of forms.

From the financial side of things, some gave \$5, some gave \$10, and some gave more. Even with a small player base, those who normally never give made a decision to donate in an effort to support the sport discipline they loved. Over the years of “getting back” from 3-Cushion (in most cases not financially), the players and fans realized that it was time to “give back” for what they had in fact received – the joy of it all and the fellowship at each event, whether in the competitive arena or watching from the sidelines. One person even agreed to match EVERY dollar contributed with 50 cents of HIS OWN. The overall “giving back” to the sport they love is helping to expand 3-Cushion interest and impact its growth in a very positive successful way!!

Each person playing 3-Cushion loves the special nature of each shot attempted and the special victories achieved with each make (or miss)!! There is something very “special” about 3-Cushion, but then again there is surely something very “special” about the select discipline of billiards you love as well. **I can only imagine how strong our overall sport would be if EVERYONE gave a LITTLE BACK to the discipline of their choice** – 8 ball, 9 ball, 10 ball, bank pool, one pocket, artistic pool, and many others!

A special thanks to EVERYONE that has given!! And, a special thanks to ANYONE that plans to “step to the plate” in the future for the sport discipline they love. **There is no better time than NOW to experience the joy of giving!** Recently I was sent the following words of wisdom for your reading enjoyment and consideration:

**“Volunteers Plant the Seeds of Kindness”
Our lives are measured not by what we have or take,
But by what we give back and the difference we make.
...For all the seeds of kindness you have planted!!**

Luke 6:38 (KJV) – “Give, and it shall be given unto you good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.”

“This is a truly remarkable promise of God. Giving refers not only to money, but also mercy, grace, love, help, etc.” – The Expositor’s New Testament (Counselor’s Edition) commentary: Copyright © 2005, 2008 Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, Baton Rouge, LA

December 21, 2012

“ENJOYING THE ROLL” TO THE “MAX”!

As the years go by, I seem to “enjoy the roll” even more on the green felt (or any other color, for that matter)! Many have asked me how this is possible when there are so many challenges of practice, competition, and other elements of the game that often derail our best efforts. My answer to this query is one of finding a “new” way of looking at all that surrounds our billiard environment both “on and off” the table; that is, a focused and positive perspective for those items that we often perceive as non – productive components for a successful game.

As a “rack” boy growing up I thought of my work as a “job” that required manual labor – racking up the pool balls for customers, sweeping the floor to keep the pool room clean, and filling the pop cooler in the main room “upstairs” with soda stored in a “downstairs” location that required careful management of rickety old steps several times during my night shift. Looking back I realized how valuable that “job” was to learn how a business worked and how people relationships established then turned into friendships for life. By reviewing the virtues of labor in a “new” way, an entirely different attitude was acquired for future career goals.

I also remember when my competitive game found disappointments of defeat as marked “on the wire” or as posted on a score sheet. I knew there must be some purpose to it all, but couldn’t put my finger on it until someone once told me that true competitive success comes after an understanding that losses can be “wins in disguise” – if a person learns in the process how the loss happened (without excuse) and accepts the overall experience as part of a much bigger game / sport picture of contentment by simply “focusing on the sight and sound” of each ball rolling.

Over time I realized that perfect practice would have its share of “unpleasant” moments mentally, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. Then, I came to discover that these seemingly negative attributes of the learning curve were simply “stepping stones” to success. Similar to how one must experience the challenge of lifting more weight or more reps via muscle feedback, a person must face the inevitable fact and a peace over the old adage – no pain, no gain.

Another ingredient of my billiard journey that for some time was very difficult at best to understand was how a “miss” could ever be accepted. The answer came to me many years ago when I realized the Harlem Globetrotters developed an entire career with a huge following of fans by missing baskets and using humorous antics to make it look like it was part of the act. I started to look at each “miss” on the table as a “make in disguise” during my entertainment shows – using cover lines in a humorous manner to condition my “right brain” that all would be OK in the overall show presentation. Laughing at myself during shows and later in the competitive arena became a parachute for acceptance of whatever happened that was perceived as not so good.

To put everything in perspective I leave you with three of the most powerful nuggets of game and life that I could ever give you to contemplate – 1) To win is great; 2) To play is greater; and 3) To love is the greatest. Learning to “enjoy the roll” to the “max” starts with a deep seated “love” of game and life regardless of the paper tally, financial status, or personal achievement attained.

May each of you experience this special “treasure of the heart” in all you do!

May 1, 2014

TO WIN! ~ TO PLAY! ~ TO LOVE!

After five decades of playing billiards in all its forms (pool, carom, snooker, and pyramid) I have come to realize an amazing solution for truly “enjoying the roll” through the paper losses, disappointing rolls, game setbacks, and other cue sport detours. No one is immune from the aforementioned stumbling blocks to the pursuit of victory in our table challenges and personal goals of becoming a champion; however, what makes the journey more palatable is when we understand the purpose and perception of it all. A few years ago I adopted a motto for our game and life experiences as follows:

TO WIN IS GREAT...

TO PLAY IS GREATER...

TO LOVE IS THE GREATEST...

Almost everyone wants to circle a “game won” or move the “bead on the wire” after a hard fought game victory. And, almost everyone desires to continue in this fulfilling manner until the final ball has dropped and the next bracket match is undertaken in a similar manner. An eventual tournament win, and then another, and so the story goes.

Oh, Yes -- TO WIN IS GREAT!

There are some individuals who just want to play the game -- some for the “first time ever” and some who desire the “first time ever” – but due to physical restrictions may never realize that dream. Then, you have those that continue to actually play the game and slowly, if ever reach champion status, but have a spirit for the game that defies logic: smiling before striking the cue ball and sharing the joy of simply playing the game with anyone who will listen to their gentle persuasion.

Oh, Yes – TO PLAY IS GREATER!!

And, then, there are a select few who seem to have a special attraction to the game whether they win or play. For this unique group of individuals the “click of the pool balls” and the “color of each ball” presents a subliminal attraction and special “love” of the game that resembles the very first time the cue, the balls, and the table became part of our life journey. Every shot becomes a favorite shot and every ball missed becomes a “make in disguise,” regardless of who is shooting it. This type of person could continue to “play the game,” even if they never win the game again.

Oh, Yes – TO LOVE IS THE GREATEST!!!

***1 Corinthians 13:13 (KJV) – “And now abides Faith, Hope, Love, these three;
but the greatest of these is Love.”***

Note: See Stephen Saporta article entitled “To Love Is The Greatest” on pages 56 – 59.

July 1, 2014

FINDING THE “MISSING LINKS” TO YOUR GAME!

I can still vividly remember my first job as a “rack boy” at Elsie’s Pool Room in Minonk, IL. Seeing the beautiful rainbow colors of the pool balls as they rolled over the green felt and hearing the gentle clicking sound of one ball against another still remain a foundational “sight and sound” image of my introduction to pool at the youthful age of ten. Elsie had a special connection to the billiard venue with her magnetic smile and joyful spirit, but displayed a disciplined control over those in the room that wanted to cause trouble or present anything other than a positive and productive side to the games being played. My early training experience helped me develop a “first love” for the game of pool and would provide for me solid “roots of reference” for future “game and life” experiences, as I learned how pool should be played and how customers / players should be treated in the right way.

When I went to college, I started to realize a “new side” to pool that was counter to the principles Elsie had taught me. My exposure to back room wagers being offered by some players needing a few extra dollars for gas, food, or whatever seemed to pull me away from my “first love” for the game and drain my joy for it in the process. After graduation, I started playing in pro events and my game skills grew, particularly in bank pool, my favorite game at the time. One night in 1972 an individual asked me to play some **banks**. A few hours later my wallet, but more importantly, my heart was broken – BIG TIME!! Something was definitely “missing” in my game and the “joy of the roll” seemed lost.

At a recent tour stop, a player asked me a two-part question – what was the most money I ever won and what was the most money I ever lost. I assumed he was not asking about tournament prize money, but rather “winning and losing” in the back room. I quickly noted that I would answer the “losing” question first, since it struck my spirit and thought process the deepest from my 1972 unfortunate calamity with the “breaking of the heart” factor as noted earlier.

I had a good job and could recover from the financial loss; however, my heart had felt a “hurt” for the game I loved that would remain forever a valued lesson for my billiard journey. At that moment I realized IF I could hurt that much “inside,” then I wondered how many others might have felt this “hurt” from my past challenges if I beat them. I did not want to be the reason for that happening in the future, so I stopped this style of playing pool without any hint of withdrawal pains. In order to satisfy my competitive urges, I followed the tournament trail and combined that with a love for show and / or teaching engagements in a tent-making career endeavor that remains to present day.

I believe Elsie’s Pool Room provided a valuable “missing link” to the game for me! The “first love” I felt in that disciplined environment centered around the “sight and sound” of the pool balls and the camaraderie shared by all that were blessed to be there to experience the heartfelt beauty, promise, and vision of our sport. No one got “hurt” and each game played became a special “game and life” victory. A few years later I discovered the REAL “missing link” – a spiritual perspective of stewardship over the game I loved. May each of you realize / discover your missing links for truly enjoying the roll!

Proverbs 22:6 (KJV) – “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

January 1, 2015

THE “EYES” (AND HEART) HAVE IT!

In this New Year, I think of player after player that has made a specific resolution to enhance his or her personal “game and life” journey. Good intention often turns into a diminishing return for the resolve created due to a host of disruptive factors. Foremost of these is more attention being given to the “analytical” component of development and little, if any, focus on the “trust / heart” side of what a player already knows as the right thing to do. To maximize results and to “enjoy the roll” more, there must be a healthy blend of left-brain quality input and a right-brain assured and repetitious “free flight” performance with heart.

To help you better understand the process in your quest for dead stroke, I would like to give you an amazing and yet very simple catalyst for success. Let’s start with the left brain as it provides analytical feedback to you via your visual sense. I often use an 8 – ball for an illustration when I do an instructional clinic, since it is probably the most recognizable pool ball in history! Holding it in front of everyone present, you can see the ball in infinite detail. It is round and black, for the most part, with a white circle and the number “8” inside it. The sense of vision via the “eyes” approves the presentation and confirms we are truly looking at an 8 – ball. Frankly speaking, an 8 – ball is as real as it can get before your eyes.

Then, I take the 8 – ball and put it in my pocket – out of sight, but NOT out of mind. It is amazing that everyone who was paying attention to the first part of my presentation and even those who weren’t paying attention, can describe in detail what an 8 –ball looks like – sight unseen! How is this possible? For pool players, this is a “no brainer.” They have seen an 8 – ball so many times with the left-brain sense of vision that they know exactly what it looks like, even when it is not physically in front of them. This “imagined vision” is engrained in the “mind’s eye” of the right brain with clarity, developing a special “trust / heart” attachment (without debate) to the “mental gift” of an 8 – ball image easily shared.

One of the many keys to success for anything in your game (or even in life) is using the left-brain analytical senses (not just the eyes) to input correct and high quality components that you desire. Then, do it enough times to program the right-brain “mind’s eye” so the “trust / heart” to a specific item of focus can be released in “free flight” motion or projected success without interference; hence achieving “dead stroke” for the job at hand.

You can also reverse the process to achieve what you would like to actually see. Close your physical eyes and let your “mind’s eye” imagine what you want – do this frequently with a strong heartfelt conviction. Whatever your goals might be in 2015 – to play better pool, to enhance your work duties or to get a new job, to make new friends or to repair broken relationships, or simply to lighten the load of life and experience more “joy” in the journey, let **the eyes (and heart) have it**.

Follow-up Note: The life cycle of a person (including the time before birth) experiences an incomprehensible number of left-brain sights, sounds, and much more. The left brain has limited storage, so each signal received must eventually go somewhere for a long-term reference position, if needed. The right brain, with nearly unlimited storage capacity, is a perfect place for safekeeping. Everything tangible to the left brain is somehow converted to a multitude of memory points in this new storage location! I look at it this way: each item that is implanted in the right brain ends up “behind a mental door.” If you want to “make a shot,” it is critical to imagine the proper door opening with a respective “make a shot” label on it. For any door you don’t want opened (that could cause poor results or whatever), imagine a huge mental Master padlock on it. Using a good mental imagery process for the doors in your right brain, coupled with the opening of the eyes of your heart spiritually, will help you to play a better game and / or experience “victory” in your life decisions.

September 1, 2015

THE “HEART” OF A CHAMPION!

After five decades of being around billiards in all its forms, I realize that champions of our sport possess select attributes that may be exhibited in a myriad of “heartfelt” and yet different ways. Many fans, players, media sources, and sponsors perceive a champion with “heart” as a person who gives their best effort and wins a game or match per a designated scoring system. It is about the winning, which is the GREAT pursuit.

The aforementioned type of champion normally displays high-level skills for executing each shot. In addition, a superior knowledge of game strategy is evident. This player is finely tuned in his or her mechanics, kicking / banking systems, mental stamina, and precise muscle memory conditioning via disciplined practice. A possession of focused confidence and “having what it takes” to play well emerges without fear or reservation of purpose.

Other champions may display a different type of “heart,” as perceived by those watching. This type of champion may not have a high winning percentage, but will present a calmness of play and spirit that exhibits “success” in an entirely different manner. A gentle smile and peaceful demeanor for this individual reminds any opponent that whatever the final score may be, all is well – win or lose! The “heart” of this champion has a mighty resolve to “enjoy the roll” in the worst of times as well as the best! It is all about the playing, which is GREATER than the winning on paper. This type of “heart” realizes that there are so many things more important than a round sphere rolling across a cloth-covered slate surface, and that there are some who can’t play at all for various reasons.

A third type of champion is one we seldom think about! The unique “heart” of this person does not have to win or play. He or she can experience the love of the game by sitting patiently in a chair watching the “colorful balls” continue their magnetic roll and hearing a sweet click as they bump into each other. Loving the game...from the “heart” is the GREATEST discovery over everything else.

During a recent trip to Las Vegas, I witnessed several champion hearts that never racked, never broke, never hit a ball, and never circled a winning score. Something special about these individuals / fans of our sport radiated a type of “heart” that perceived: 1) every loss as a victory in disguise; 2) every miss as a make in disguise; and 3) every failure as a success in disguise. “Racking up a victory in one’s game and life” echoed a simple mantra for a journey of joy both “on and off” the table – to share the beauty, promise, and vision of the special art form before them – forgoing personal gain and/or recognition.

As you continue your “game and life” travels through the rest of 2015 and beyond, may each of you experience the champion “heart” within!!

December 8, 2015

THE VICTORY SPIRIT – HEART! MIND! BODY!

Before us is another year with pool balls rolling; cushions compressing; gravity working its magic; and game results often determining the extent of enjoyment derived from playing our magnetic art form. In this article I would like to suggest a foundational principle of life that is seldom discussed or presented as it pertains to our sport / game.

The “spirit” within us is tempered by how our heart, mind, and body work in relation to each other. Our heart is a mighty muscle that pumps blood to our brain and every other part of our body. The behavioral actions we present both on and off the table are free will decided after analysis by the mind, as the heart continues to tap into various emotions that seem to affect such responses.

As an example, if we have an emotional feeling of hunger, we make a decision to: 1) fix a meal, 2) grab a sandwich somewhere, or 3) forgo eating until later. Body metabolism can be affected in a healthy or not-so-healthy way by our decision; thereby, becoming a catalyst for how we feel, which comes across to others with the “spirit” we emit in the heat of battle “on” the table or when we encounter others “off” the table. Good nourishment of the body, done in the right timing, often makes us feel good, and we will most likely portray a likeable spirit to those around us. Conversely, not eating properly or eating at the wrong time can create a less than positive spirit / demeanor as perceived by others.

As a myriad of emotions surround and manifest themselves to us, the heart continues to pump unfiltered blood, so to speak, to the brain as it carries remnants of an emotional baggage that can negatively effect our decision making. Anger, jealousy, and bitterness are just a few emotions that need to be carefully screened in our game and life journey. If not, we will be unable to keep these elements from interfering with healthy, positive, and constructive mental decisions that produce appropriate strategy moves and an orderly, smooth-flowing mechanical process than can be applied to overall victory.

To “filter” or “keep in check” negative emotions, some find peace by talking with a special friend, some by self-meditation / focus exercises, and some by calling upon the Special Spirit within them to calm their heart. Once the emotional baggage is removed and / or subdued, the heart is allowed to pump “filtered” blood to the brain. This helps “refresh the mind” and creates an opportunity for it to make wholesome decisions, thereby producing a better game and enhanced relationships among fellow players. May your heart, mind, and body be transformed into a “victory spirit” both on and off the table!

***Proverbs 4:23 (NAS) – “Watch over your heart with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life.”***

SPECIAL “LIFE” / GAME ENHANCING THEMES (7 ARTICLES)

March 29, 2002

ADJUSTMENT! ADJUSTMENT! ADJUSTMENT!

Great Falls, Montana... Rock Springs, Wyoming... Pueblo, Colorado... North Platte, Nebraska... Wichita, Kansas... Springfield, Missouri... Decatur, Illinois... Indianapolis, Indiana... King’s Island, Ohio... Valley Forge, Pennsylvania... New Orleans, Louisiana... Las Vegas, Nevada... Utica, New York... Bangor, Maine... Jacksonville, Florida... Houston, Texas... Los Angeles, California... Moscow, Russia... Kiev, Ukraine... Luxembourg, Luxembourg... Willingen, Germany... Malaysia... Singapore... Vilnius, Lithuania... Mankato, Minnesota... Sioux City, Iowa... Bay City, Michigan... and on... and on... and on... No matter where “Dr. Cue”[®] goes, or, better said, no matter where “Ms. Cue” sends him, I have discovered a recurring necessity in each show, tournament, clinic, and/or challenge match...

ADJUSTMENT...ADJUSTMENT...ADJUSTMENT...

Adjustments for the speed of the table... adjustments for cushion rebound angles... adjustments for clean vs. “not so clean” pool balls... adjustments for different cue and tip experiences... adjustments for a headache or muscle pain... adjustments for loose and tight racks... adjustments for opponent attitudes... adjustments for the “weather,” which seems to affect everything, and a myriad of adjustments for hundreds of other environmental, human, and billiard physical properties.

With all these considerations, it is a wonder that we ever play well. All is not lost however...as I remind you of seven key “elements” of success...to help each of you overcome most problematic situations and/or conditions that sometimes appear too overpowering. Learning the following “golden nuggets” of an enlightened game approach will surely take you to new heights, and enable you to understand how to handle the “little” and “big” things that cause us to stagnate and/or question our abilities.

1) Solid Structural Mechanic “Tuning” of Fundamentals – The key to this is the miracle formula:

Straight Alignment + Straight Stroke = Shot Success

- 2) Specific knowledge of the “physics” of pool – In simplified terms
- 3) Study of “diamond systems” – Learning the “dots on the rails” – The easy way
- 4) Regimen of practice with continued conviction
- 5) Application of “total feeling” to the game...with “burning focus”
- 6) Right-brain understanding so that “dead stroke” may be achieved
- 7) Development of the “heart joy” of billiards expressed via its sights and sounds

In addition, add a little “spice” and “excitement” to your game by trying your hand / cue at our “Dr. Cue”[®] Classic “Artistic Pool” Tour competitions. This has become a magnetic sport vehicle of learning for many years now.

Study, practice, and adjust...and always – ENJOY THE ROLL!!!!

September 30, 2002

REST – A SPECIAL FOUNDATION FOR YOUR GAME!

There is a unique type of “busy-ness” that goes with our “Dr. Cue”® and “Ms, Cue” on the road business, such as: laying out the routing schedule, planning each logistical detail – packing, unpacking, and repacking; performing; teaching; doing challenge matches; driving; eating; sleeping; breathing; and on...and on...and on. I have told many people that I get plenty of “rest” in my “down the road” position in the passenger seat. While Marty drives nearly 90% of the time I take a series of short naps during a long journey...convinced that I am resting.

“Rest”...ah, yes! Such a beautiful word – rest! Upon a recent tour visit to Western Maryland, Marty and I visited some of our friends we had been staying with for over 20 years...whenever we were doing shows in that part of the country. During this current year stopover, we discovered the real meaning of the wonderful and refreshing “gift of rest” in a “retreat” type of way. Adequate sleep, eating properly, watching TV and/or a favorite DVD, “catching up” on some lagging business projects, but in a more leisure agenda and timeframe, and enjoying an assortment of other “restful” amenities right in our back door, so to speak...all became a “healing formula” for a new focus / renewed vigor to our work and lives together. A coupling with daily “spiritual” nourishment in prayer, reading, and meditation made for a complete and holistic feeling of oneness within our minds, bodies, and spirits. I knew that God must have surely created a miraculous “special time” in our schedule...to allow this to happen.

In light of this much-needed education...for what “rest” is really all about, I propose to each of you – try it...you’ll like it! In over 35 years of teaching players of all skill levels, I have found a “common thread” among most of them. That binding agent deals with “focus” or the lack of it. Most players lose enhanced concentration very easily, are sidetracked from their assigned duties in a specific game/match, and seem to wander aimlessly from shot to shot...on occasion...for some illusive reason. I am now convinced that proper “rest” is the key to finding your mental and physical focus...with a renewed “zest in spirit” for playing, sharing, and enjoying all in the process.

In your regimen of sequential practice, competitive play modes, and/or the “busy-ness” of your daily activities...take time to rest. **That is a precious “gift” we all should seek...and find.** I pray each of you experience “rest” in a very special way. Your vision for the game will be much keener...your decisions will be much wiser...and your skills will improve much more quickly.

Enjoy this special foundation for your game and life, my friends...REST!!

***Matthew 11:28 (KJV) – “Come unto Me, all you who labor, and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.”***

September 28, 2003

3-CUSHION BILLIARDS – A MARVELOUS TRAINING TOOL!

I have been asked many times what contributed to my foundational understanding of pool more than anything else. In 1967 I had my first encounter with 3-Cushion Billiards and discovered a special attraction to the value and beauty of this magnetic and challenging discipline.

The knowledge I have acquired over the years from 3-Cushion Billiards has provided special “transfer agents” to pocket billiards. I started to realize the mathematical and physical properties on the carom table that could be applied to the pool table. Primary of these was the use of the common denominator on “all” tables (carom or otherwise); namely – length being twice the width. This geometric normality from one table to the next allowed the “diamonds” (sights) to be used for calculating specific system track lines and angles. Subsequent book and video productions by my wife and me under RACK UP A VICTORY titling highlight these “secret systems” of the carom art converted to the pool table. Banking and Kicking became my passion in this conversion process, along with revelation of special “artistic” principles / insights.

An additional feature of carom play that renders tremendous wisdom for pocket billiards is in the use of “english” or “side spin” plus controlled “dead” ball or “vertical line” cue tip placements. The relationship of the mathematical with this physical amenity allows for the connection of a cue ball from the object ball contact (point A) to a first cushion contact (point B), and then to point C, point D, and beyond. All of this is extremely valuable to help an aspiring student in any billiard discipline...to grow in their personal skill level, mental confidence, and an understanding of the movement of the “round spheres” across the table.

A final note of reward lies in the “abstract” or creative nature of 3-Cushion. The opportunity to “draw a picture” or “paint a portrait” of the shot at hand opens a new dimension of approach and realized beauty within the execution process. The blending of “left-brain” concepts with this “right-brain” association will take any player to new heights of any desired cue sport activity.

The purpose to all this is revealed in the offensive weapon of making or hitting an object ball to avoid giving “ball in hand,” which for most top players is a sure formula to defeat. Another positive benefit to this mathematical certainty is in the playing of position from one ball to the next. On a defensive note, but just as effective, this knowledge allows for playing safeties when “making a shot” is not an option.

I would wholeheartedly recommend that anyone wanting to become proficient at the game of pocket billiards to engage in the “carom” arts with a proper mentor. This will help an individual learn in the right sequence and understand the complexities and exciting mysteries contained in the “carom” arena. In lieu of finding a “carom” table and someone excited about teaching you some “key” shots, a review of my book and/or videos is a suitable replacement, but never like the “real” thing.

Personally, I consider it an extreme blessing to have encountered 3-Cushion in my formative years, a game I continue to enjoy playing. I pray every person will experience this “special” joy in his or her billiard journey.

Best Victories...the “carom” and “pocket” way...always!!

July 2, 2006

WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT!

No one is immune from experiencing game “abnormalities” that oftentimes happen when you least expect it. These cueing / cue sport mishaps must be studied and can be used as “valued” training aids to overall game/sport development. This requires a special kind of “trust” in our journey. Just as one must “trust” their tuned stroke to perform in a “free flight” motion under pressure, one must trust and seek the common good in things that seem “odd” at times, and often, just don’t make sense.

During the Masters “Artistic Pool” Championship held this past March, I found my mind and heart challenged to the limit with “oddities” of scoring and personal “skills” execution. A strange set of circumstances left many players / fans in attendance bewildered, and yet amazed to the point of laughter. As most of you know, our professional Artistic Pool skills are tested in 8 disciplines. We do two disciplines in a “round,” break, then another “round,” break etc., until we complete the program.

Trust Tester #1 – It is quite normal to have “good” scoring disciplines and some “not so good” scoring disciplines, as each player seems to favor some skill tests more than others and performs accordingly. This event was no different for me, except for the “strange and wildly erratic” differences between my “good” and my “not so good” scoring posts. I started with the Draw Discipline and set a new “world record” of scoring “3” points out of over 40 possible. That’s right – “3” points!! After scoring a near perfect score in the 2002 World event for the Draw Discipline, I wondered where my “draw” stroke had gone. Nothing seemed to work and my score showed it!

I mustered enough “trust” during this rather “bleak” moment, knowing that something good was just around the corner. I scored better in the Follow Discipline (which wasn’t hard to do), but my debut “round” in this event left me near the bottom of the pack. Scoring in Round 2 with the Bank/Kick and Stroke Disciplines helped me move up the points list, but I still had a high mountain to climb.

Trust Tester #2 – The Jump Discipline is one of my favorite skill challenges, so I felt comfortable starting Round 3. Little did I know that the when you least expect it syndrome was waiting for me once again. This time “5” points total!! Embarrassing, but humorous to say the least! During one of my shots an “oddity of oddities” occurred. I banked a ball cross side by the book. The cue ball jumped over a row of blocking balls and landed on “top” of the long rail past the side pocket. It rolled without hesitation down a “groove” where the cloth meets the wood to the corner pocket. Now the remarkable part – instead of falling back on the surface and making the ball, the cue ball found its way into a small “circular” groove on top of the pocket, made a beautiful 90 degree direction change, and locked in a rolling pattern on top of the short rail, until it fell off the rail and disappeared in the other corner pocket. This might have been the greatest “trick shot” of all time, but, alas, no camera - a memory for life!! At that very moment, I knew I must “trust” whatever happened in this discipline and move on to brighter days / hopeful shots ahead.

After five disciplines, I had earned two “world” records for the “lowest” scores other than “zero” for the Draw and Jump Disciplines. Pretty impressive, huh? A hum and murmur started among the players and fans, wanting to know what was wrong with me and “who” would show up for the last three disciplines. Would it be “Dr. Cue”® – who basically gets paid for missing – or would it be Tom Rossman, who tries to get paid for competition? I knew I had to trust, regardless of the final outcome.

Then a “miracle of miracles” – 5 Masse Shots – made! 5 Trick / Fancy Shots – made! 5 Special Art Challenges – made! Wow and Double Wow! From a virtual bottom to a top position – Was I dreaming? No, I was experiencing something that is hard to explain. All I know is that no matter where you are in your game...during a match or during your overall life’s journey...there is a “trust” factor, and there is a “when you least expect it” factor to it all. After all these years, I think this event and the 2002 ESPN Trick Shot Magic event had the biggest impact on me in trying to understand what this “temporary” assignment on Earth is all about.

See also, “The Angel, The Mountain, and The Victory” at: www.drcuepromotions.com
(Click on the “Schedule / Travelogue” menu tab. Then, the “story behind the story” – 2002 ESPN)

Psalms 118:8 (NKJV) – “It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man.”

December 1, 2007

FINDING YOUR PERSONAL SPORT “PLAYING NICHE”!

One of the special joys for me over the years has been playing not only the “regular” games of pool, but also the “artistic - sport and show” side of the game. Many people, who have watched me do a “Dr. Cue”[®] show with a host of Artistic Pool shots, have asked me if I play professional pool. Right after doing over 100 skill shots (that many times defy the laws of physics and apply to each unique facet of cue movement), I found this question very interesting. Over time, I realized the art of entertaining – with “time-delayed” makes – confirmed this inquiry.

Many of those asking this question were thinking mostly 9-ball, with its predominant attachment to billiard promotions over the last decade. A person engaged in this visual mode of watching “pro players” run out...game after game...developed a mental image and concept that top players just don’t miss very often. The nature of what these “pro” players were doing was to break and run out...break and run out...and on and on. When a shot could not be made, a safety was done and that was about it for what each person was doing and what the viewer was seeing. Simple, huh?

Along came the Artistic Pool professional and things changed – some misses, a few makes, some more misses, and a few more makes. In many cases, the misses outnumbered the makes. Then the justified question – does this person play professional pool? I have learned to address this confusing issue in terms of what “professional” really means by suggesting a person think of football and each position on the team. Each player...center, quarterback, field goal kicker, tackle, defensive lineman, and all the rest are surely professional. The center is “professional” hiking the ball, the quarterback is “professional” throwing the ball, and every other player on the team is “professional” in the respective sport duties they perform.

In a similar vein, the “professional side” of pool has “refined” over the last decade to include the pro 9-ball player, the pro 8-ball player, the pro bank pool player, the pro one pocket player, and yes, the pro Artistic Pool player. Artistic Pool has an expanded art form with eight “professional” specialties – 1) trick / fancy shots, 2) special arts, 3) draw shots, 4) follow shots, 5) bank / kick shots, 6) stroke shots, 7) jump shots, and 8) masse shots. At most pro events, we have nine pro champions – an overall point’s winner and a champion of each discipline. Similar to gymnastics in structure, the best “pro” at masse is not always the best “pro” at draw and so on.

In most cases, the pro 9-ball players know their limits and do not compete at the pro “artistic” level and the pro Artistic Pool players do not compete at the pro 9-ball level. There are exceptions, but generally speaking, an applied focus to the “niche” one finds best for them is what creates a lifelong joy to their individual billiard experiences. In my life, I found the thrill of Artistic Pool from the show side in the mid - 1980’s and the competitive side full time in 2000. Finding my personal “playing niche” was indeed something beautiful in my billiard journey. I still play the “regular” games, but I discovered my true “pro” side was in hiking the ball and not throwing it.

I encourage each of you to follow your dreams to be the best you can be both “on and off” the table. And, may you “find your personal sport playing niche” in the process!

February 27, 2008

A DOCTOR'S PATIENCE...AND PATIENTS!

I remember telling my grandmother that I wanted to be a “doctor” when I grew up – an M.D. (Doctor of Medicine), to be exact...with an Ear, Nose, and Throat (E.N.T.) specialty. She told me that would take a lot of **patience** and lots of **patients!** Little did I know that I would become a “doctor” of a different kind in October of 1989 – a B.D. (Doctor Of Billiardology).

Special Update: A good friend and fellow Brother in Christ named James Barton Dant, known as “The Preacher,” gave me a really neat shirt several years ago with a “specialty” attachment printed on it as:

Heart and Stroke Specialist

Note: Since those early days of the specialty I “wanted to be” via my own efforts, God had other ideas and equipped me to reach out to the hurting / searching “hearts” of those I meet in this life and to fine tune the errant “strokes” of those players requesting it! We really like this attachment! It is so appropriate to the “Dr. Cue”[®] moniker God has allowed in the journey! ***Thank you, Preacher! “Dr. Cue”[®] and “Ms. Cue”***

A host of specialty acronyms relating to specific event titles followed this primary acronym and rather comical “ology” assignment, including ESPN TSMC (ESPN Trick Shot Magic Champion), WMTSC (World Masters Trick Shot Champion), NAPTFSC (North American Professional Trick and Fancy Shots Champion), WPA WAPC (WPA World Artistic Pool Champion), plus a dozen or so others with an alphabet soup list of letters that often confuse even me. Over time, I used this cornucopia of titles to promote with and otherwise entertain cueing artists and inquiring minds around the world.

The “patience” and “patients” factors my grandmother alluded to in those early days became household words to me in a fascinating journey of entertainment shows, teaching, and competitive challenges. I learned that an intruding weakness of the moment in my game and mindset often occurred from a missed shot, a disappointing loss, or even a concerning word from some person trying to “rattle me” in dead stroke. In those weak times I discovered how to find strength and courage in my Spirit, leading to “patience” and eventual success in the effort being applied. Without the weaknesses of life and the many disappointments that seemed to leech themselves to those weaknesses, the ultimate strength to move forward for even greater challenges would not have taken place. In business, a rule of thumb for success is “location...location...location” – in billiards of any type, a good rule of thumb for success is patience...patience...patience!!

The second word my grandmother stressed was patients. As a “doctor” I would need “lots of them” to be successful in the financial eyes of the world. Then, one day at 39,000 feet, I discovered a much higher value on what this all meant. A Time Magazine found its way into the seat pocket in front of me on an international flight. Thumbing through the magazine, I found one page earmarked, so I took a careful view of its contents. Right at the top of the page, I found a message that has become for me an uplifting “business” motto of life and blended quite well with the “lifeline” message...**RACK UP A VICTORY IN YOUR GAME AND LIFE...**that I have been using for over 25 years now. It read as follows:

Success is finding your calling and passion in life, and pursuing it, regardless of financial gain.

To achieve the aforementioned goal, I realized that the players, fans, and supporters of my work were a special resource of “patients” wanting to improve their game, learning how to handle difficult times of play and life issues, and oftentimes just talking to someone that would listen to their heart. The shows and teaching / challenge arenas I had been exposed to became a “calling and passion” in my life and the “financial gain” came from an intrinsic value of hearts reaching out to one another – or as the commercial states – priceless!!

In summation, the world of Billiardology (study of spheres, projectiles, and planes), more specifically, the beauty, promise, and vision of Artistic Pool, is the niche and “medium of expression” I use to enjoy the roll.

May you develop a lot of “patience” and become a friend to many “patients” along the way!!

December 31, 2013

NEW BEGINNINGS IN A NEW YEAR!

New Year resolutions! New Year personal promises! New Year changes! New Year dreams and visions! The list can be very long at times and often “ends” with an unfulfilled challenge of many items going dormant within a short period of time. Even with best intentions, we seem to develop a “paralysis of analysis” type of approach to each item instead of “enjoying the roll” for those items where our main passion / calling is anchored securely and where personal “focus” is guaranteed to see the goal(s) before us become a fruitful reality.

Normally a “new beginning” for any project / concept includes a farewell or “completion stage” for a former mission goal, often creating an uneasy feeling as we begin to step out of a conditioned comfort zone. Programmed successes from past endeavors remain in our physical movements / memory banks, and they seem to taunt us to go back to the old and forget the new. The mystery of something “new” eventually becoming comfortable for us becomes our greatest challenge.

In my early 50’s I discovered a true passion for the “sport and show” of Artistic Pool after over 40 years of playing all the regular and often expected games for a pool player. This “new beginning” became a dynamic focal point of my competitive career, as I remained loyal to its ultimate challenge and calling.

Removing a “split focus” between several “games” at the professional level allowed me to experience amazing “mountaintop” moments event after event. This continued from 2000 until each mountain had been climbed and each blessing was realized in a short span of 11 years. Once again the time had come to focus on a “new beginning” for using the gifts and talents I had been given.

When I left the competitive Artistic Pool arena in 2011, **I knew I had to focus on the purpose of a new beginning**. Without doing so, I could have easily gone back to competing again in an attempt to garner another title / championship award. A personal soul-searching helped me realize that I had been equipped via my prior journey experiences for a far higher “purpose” in an exciting faith-driven “game and life” adventure.

Bottom-line, I believe a person should find some quiet time to “have a little talk with himself or herself” in regard to “game and life” experiences in the New Year and beyond. Many years ago I found a wonderful life application motto that I carry with me to this day – **Success is finding your calling and passion in life, and pursuing it, regardless of financial gain**. Any windfall from such effort becomes a by-product of a true “calling and passion” in one’s game and life.

As you move forward in the New Year, I encourage you to consider any “new beginning” with dedicated focus, and **I hope you discover a “true calling and passion” in all you do!!**

LIGHTHEARTED THEMES (4 ARTICLES)

July 6, 2005

WHO'S THE BEST? – WHAT'S THE BEST?

I would have a hard time venturing a guess on how many times I have been asked these two questions over my 35+ years as a professional player and instructor. In my early days, I liked to think I was the best player at bank pool. Alas, back in 1972 I learned an expensive lesson one night that broke my heart and wallet, and humbled my thinking drastically. Since that time, I have tried to crusade for the positive virtues of our sport, leaving the negative parts of it on the back burner of life.

I have learned that the “best” is a term so fleeting, and in many cases, often forgotten. On several occasions I have mentioned Willie Mosconi to the fans of our sport, only to find out that none of them knew of his name and accompanying multiple world titles in straight pool, or of what many believe as him being the greatest player of all time. The “best” movie names of Fast Eddy and Minnesota Fats linger in the minds of a select few due only to their character enlightenment in *The Hustler*. An assortment of TV pool personalities, a myriad of world champions (past and present), and an abundance of “world class” players from every corner of the globe permeate our minds with various images, demeanor characteristics, and skill presentations, as we develop our opinions of **who's the best**.

In reference to the second question of **what's the best**, I find it best to factor in the humor and entertainment style of “Dr. Cue”[®] in my answers. For example, a table with magnetic pockets is **best**. This would include the “attracting” feature of magnetism for the serious players, and the “repelling” feature of magnetism for those more prone to the entertainment side of our sport. Other “best” items are **free chalk**, which most of us have discovered exists “only” after a miscue. The “best” tip is the one I use called a **cue tip**, which offers morning, afternoon, and evening amenities.

On a serious note, the “best” way to find out what “tip” is best for you is to chart a practice regimen of approximately two dozen shots, including banks, kicks, position/safety shots, and assorted cut shots using various english applications. Use your present tip and chart the results of this routine each day for approximately ten days. Repeat this process with any and all tips that you desire to test, by using them on your cue under the same conditions and same flex shaft. This may require changing the tip if you don't have two or more shafts to do this experiment. Once you have done this “tip” experiment, your chart testing results should reveal the “best” tip performance for you and what to use with confidence. Keep in mind that jump and masse applications, plus snooker, carom, and pyramid play modes normally consist of different cue amenities.

This latter point leads up to my final “best tip” which is to “use two or more cues and call me in the morning”!!

March 28, 2006

GUARANTEED “BEAUTIES” OF OUR SPORT!

There appear to be some things in pool that happen with a commonplace and disappointing “assurance” to them regardless of our skillful and determined efforts to deter or manipulate their outcome. In light of these “guaranteed” frustrations to playing excellence, I have grown to appreciate a subtle “beauty” to each in the midst of chaos when they occur. It is my hope that you also will find some degree of relief as you consider my perspective for enjoying the roll!!

Ah, yes – the scratch...the miscue...and the miss!! These 3 elements of play have challenged mind, body, and spirit for years...for thousands upon thousands of players around the world. No one is immune from their presence on the “green” (or some other color) cloth, while the reactive measure of conduct for handling them has determined many a paper victory or defeat!

I want to give you what appears to some as a rather odd approach to absorbing their impact emotionally. These “humorous” tidbits of wisdom have been garnered from over 40 years of show / teaching experiences and challenge matches during tournament and audience challenge interactions.

The “scratch” has unique value to it. First of all, if it is done in a “kicking” pattern to an object ball, it normally means that you have hit the shot “perfect” when the cue ball follows directly into the pocket after the ball is made. It also confirms your mechanics combined with a respective “systems” application is right on. If you are that accurate to scratch, then the next time a similar shot comes up, you should be confident that you can be slightly “imperfect” with the cue ball to “not scratch” by adjusting ever so little on english, first cushion aim, or speed. Other “scratches” that catch us off guard can be used to understand effects of high, stop, and low for “tangent” line travels off an object ball, as well as the long and short angle cushion returns for position play.

The “miscue” has been one of my most treasured learning tools. In the field of Artistic Pool we use “side spin” in ways most “regular” game players don’t think of or would dare venture. The percentage of “miscuing” is exponential for many stroke, draw, follow, and masse shots of our magnetic discipline. I have found that learning to become a “master of the miscue” removes the fear of doing it, and consequently allows greater confidence in using extreme spin when needed. I always remind myself that “Ms. Cue” is beautiful, and I feel so much better after that!!

The “miss” is priceless! To stop an object ball on a specific point on the table other than in the pocket is a rare treat and one of the most beautiful and yet difficult things to do. I have yet to meet a person that does not know the location of the pockets. If I were at the table now, I am sure each of you could point to a pocket I asked you about, thereby confirming its location. In other words, almost everyone knows the six potential “destination points” on the table. What is really amazing is “stopping” the object ball exactly on one of the over sixty-four quadrillion “points” on the table playfield (if scaled). Missing allows one to experience the joy of watching the object ball roll to “locations of challenge” that will probably never be duplicated on subsequent shots. Venturing into the unknown (by accident) can produce huge rewards for future game applications.

A final bonus benefit to the scratch, the miscue, and the miss is the fact that you will get to rest. I have discovered that being a “good spectator” as a player is one of those little things in life that we sometimes don’t appreciate. Our game has significant and sometimes “hidden” beauty to it from the sideline of life. The ability to observe and laugh during these precious learning moments has lightened my heart for years, and has taught me to: “**never give up**” – three words Winston Churchill so aptly stated during World War II.

May you always look, learn, and “enjoy the roll” in your game and life!

July 1, 2008

MRS. CUE, MISS CUE, MISCUE, AND MS. CUE!

I want to take a slight departure from my normal focus on Artistic Pool and its game applications to tell you about a funny story that took place recently. During one of my show presentations, I experienced a “miscue” from hitting the cue ball with excessive sidespin and a slightly errant cue movement in the process. One of the fans watching did not know the extreme nature of the shot increasing the odds of such an action, so the often spoken words – “Chalk’s Free” – rang out across the venue floor.

On this particular night, there were several tables in the back of the room with players “enjoying the roll” themselves rather than watching “Dr. Cue”[®] getting paid for missing balls. Oh, if they only knew that a **miss** was simply a **make in disguise!!** That’s another story for another time and a lesson to be learned!

Seizing the opportunity for some “extra fun” in the evening festivities, I ran back to the players doing their own thing and started picking up all the chalk. When asked what I was doing, I excitedly explained that someone in the front of the room had told me that “**Chalk’s Free**,” so I thought I would help myself. One bewildering look after another followed my frenzied journey, but after the dust had settled and I gave the chalk back, all was well and everyone laughed about it. Fortunately, I didn’t have to explain the joke, since almost everyone has heard the famous line “**Chalk’s Free**.” Just so you know, I have two grosses of chalk at home – one that cost me \$29.95 and one that’s free!!

Later that night, I was playing challenge matches and another humorous thing happened. My opponent executed a shot with a resultant “miscue” due to some hand, wrist, and arm contortions that I had not seen in some time. The first words spoken by him were – “I hate a miscue,” to which I quickly responded “Excuse, me”! I explained that my wife’s name was “Ms. Cue.” He quickly retracted his statement. Now, that was funny!! I proceeded to explain to him that my wife spelled her name M-S-C-U-E, and the action he had done on the table was spelled M-I-S-C-U-E. All was fine in “river city” after that!!

For the record, there are four references to “CUE” when it comes to relationships using that attachment in their name, either legally or in an entertainment moniker connection. The obvious are “Miss Cue” for someone not married and “Mrs. Cue” for someone married. Ms. Cue can be for either one, but in my case, it has been 24+ years of “Dr. Cue”[®] and “Ms. Cue” as partners in marriage and business.

The fourth reference to “CUE” is, of course, the relationship we have all had at one time or another with the ever popular “MISCUE” in our playing experiences. Since chalk is not free and someday you may be married to a “Ms. Cue” of your own, I suggest you chalk consistently, shoot straight with a firm bridge, and limit your use of extreme english to select shots done with specialized training for them, as you Rack Up A Victory In Your Game and Life!!

January 1, 2011

TABLES, DOGS, PYRAMIDS, & CAMELS!

For many of us the adjectives “merry” and “happy” are still ringing in our heads after several weeks and even months of festive events and fellowship gatherings. When laughter is added to the mix, these two words take on an enhanced meaning. Victor Borge, a consummate performer as a comedic pianist, once quipped a great line – “laughter is the shortest distance between 2 people.” **Proverbs 17:22 (KJV) states: “A merry heart does good like a medicine.”** As a “Doctor of Billiardology” I often prescribe laughter, as the essence of humor, to help “heal and bond” hearts during varied “game and life” experiences.

Many years ago McDermott engraved over a dozen “excuses for losing and / or not playing up to one’s best expectations” on the butt of one of their cue sticks. Among them were funny lines such as: stick is too long (near butt cap), stick is too short (near joint), pool balls are dirty, and the ever-popular table must be out of level. I have several stories relating to my own list of “humorous excuses” to share with you. Please feel free to laugh if so inclined, but keep in mind that some of these situations have “residual effect humor” to them. You will read the text now without effect, but in about two weeks you will be “rolling in laughter” as the humor sets in. My prescription for that is to “use two cues and call me in the morning”!

I was playing for a free trip to Las Vegas on a table that had an extreme slate roll – the cue ball would “circle back” to you if hit at a certain speed. I was shooting the ball before the 8-ball, but could not get good position via normal methods because of my opponent’s object balls. I remembered the roll, which was close to my shot. If I played the “right” speed, I could make my ball, with the cue ball “circling back” between two of my opponent’s balls to get perfect shape on the 8-ball. Click – Vegas bound!! My opponent could not believe that the table cost him that game and match. I guess it’s a matter of perspective and learning to play the roll. Funny!!

Once I was accused of “kicking” a table to help make a ball sitting near a pocket. After the referee confirmed that the ball had dropped by cue ball contact and not by me kicking that 1300-pound piece of furniture, I felt much better. When the person reminded me again much later that I had “kicked” the table, I offered to give back my prize money if he felt in his heart that it had in fact happened. He did not take me up on the offer, ending another funny table situation!

Other “table excuses” when I do shows in an effort to get some laughter are: must be a left-handed table, pockets are moving, hit the ball perfect – pocket is in wrong place, magnets in pockets must be turned off, table rolls affected by air currents in the room, table is too long or too short, and table is “too far from” or “too close to” the audience. Please, use freely!!

One of the funniest situations that turned into a perceived “excuse” that has been laughed about many times was when a “dog” ate my glasses just prior to a 3-Cushion tournament I was scheduled to play in. Staying with friends the night before the event, I put my glasses on a small table next to the bed. In the morning the glasses were on the floor with “chew marks” on the lens and frame – sad, but true...and a very humorous story!!

A latest episode was when my journey deep inside a “pyramid” in Egypt affected my stance and balance while I was playing over a month later. The Egyptian pyramid connection did occur, in which I made an unwise jump inside the tomb, landing on the stone floor and stressing my left leg. After that, I roared a camel, which I am sure is affecting my billiard game in some way. OK, I’ll use the “camel” excuse in a pinch!!

“Ms. Cue” and I hope you enjoy a “merry” heart, experience some special “happy” times, and learn to “laugh” more as you share the joy of your spirit with others.

VICTORY TERMS / QUOTATIONS / SAPORTA COMMENTARIES

Macmillan Dictionary Definitions Applicable To Goal Oriented Results:

Winning – 1) to succeed in some effort or endeavor; 2) to obtain or reach, especially after long effort

Victory (general word for the decisive defeat of an enemy or other hostile force) – 1) act, instance, or condition of having defeated an opponent or enemy, as in a contest or armed conflict; 2) advantage or superiority gained as in a contest or struggle

Triumph (synonym word) – 1) successful outcome of any struggle – glorifies or acclaims the victor, his or her brilliance, and supremacy in totally crushing opposition

Quotation from movie: “White Men Can’t Jump”:

Rosie Perez (played Gloria Clemente): “Sometimes when you win, you really lose. And sometimes when you lose, you really win. And sometimes when you win or lose, you actually tie. And sometimes when you tie, you actually win or lose. Winning and losing is all one big organic globule from which one extracts what one needs.” Copyright (1992), 20th Century Fox.

Personal Note: I often tell others I haven’t lost since 1984 – even if someone beats me “on paper” or “on the wire” (as most look at winning), I experience a victory (win) in “my heart.” Therefore, based on my assessment of the moment (2 winners), one might be able to “extract” that it is a tie; thus, being relational to the Perez (Clemente) quotation above.

Note: Above scenarios reflect a “Mind Game Of Sorts” – presenting a “Perception Of Results.”

Saporta Support Statement for Perez (Clemente) quotation above – (submitted in an email from Stephen Saporta on 3/27/12): “I never really appreciated these lines until I met ‘Dr. Cue’® last December... **Now they make complete sense to me.**”

My good friend Stephen Saporta is a fellow pool-playing student of the game and life. He is also a lawyer and has provided insightful commentary to several of the instructional articles I have written and / or the shows / clinics I have done. In addition, he wrote an awesome foreword to this manual (page 4), a special article (pages 56 thru 59), and was instrumental in proofing / editing a final copy for release!

Thank you very much, Stephen! Your valued contributions are a testament to the learning process and a blessing to this work! Best victory to you and yours, always!

-- “Dr. Cue”® and “Ms. Cue”

What follows are a few of Stephen’s thought – provoking responses / commentaries. Please allow them to expand the horizons of your mind, as they have done to mine.

“Dr. Cue”® Topic / Title – To Win! To Play! To Love!

Topic Theme: 1) To win is great 2) To play is greater 3) To love is the greatest

Topic Proposition – Could you play if you never won again?

Proposition Comments: (as presented in an email from Stephen Saporta on 4/18/12):

That truly is "the issue," isn't it? Being an attorney, I need to define terms here, before I answer the question. I am about to sound like a former President: "Well, that all depends on what the definition of the word 'won' is."

OK! Could I play if I knew in advance that I would never win again? It might well depend on how badly I was going to get beaten. I play in a league where, given my handicap, it is always a race to either four or five games. Am I never going to win another game, or another match? If the answer is: "I will never win another match," I might be able to live with that and continue playing, with the knowledge that I will win an occasional game during my match. It would be exciting to find out which game or games it would be.

If the answer is: "I will never win another game," then that might be really difficult for me to handle. And yet, of course, as we play this game of infinite regression... I would take joy in at least pocketing balls or laying down a great safety against my opponent. It is, after all, a competition.

If the answer is: "I would never be allowed to pocket another ball," I might quit the game, but probably not. Because I love to play defense! The thrill of laying down a great safety in order to get "ball in hand" is something worth continuing to play for.

But what if I have the advanced knowledge that my opponent will always escape the safeties I lay down in front of him? Will he or she always execute a legal hit, or will my opponent actually pocket a ball and run out? I mean, there are safeties, and then, there are safeties. I am no longer able to pocket balls or execute safeties from which my opponent cannot only escape, but pocket a ball from his own suit, and go on to run out every time. Would I still be willing to play?

Do I ever get to shoot? Or am I merely a rack boy for my opponent? Now we get down to brass tacks. Is the opening break determined by a lag, or by the flip of a coin? If it is a coin flip, then forget about it. I give up the game I love so much. But if I get to lag... now you're talking. Even if I lose every single lag, and my opponent gets the break, and breaks and runs, repeatedly, and all I get to do is rack the balls, I'm thinking that if I at least get to lag for the break at the beginning of each match, maybe I can still "enjoy the roll" enough to keep playing the game. After all, you showed me a challenge where players try to lag within a ball's width of the head rail, and do it five times in a row, and no one has been able to accomplish that feat. It seems an impossible task!

I am hitting on something here! Do I try this "lagging" challenge over and over and over again, or do I quit? If winning is defined as five in a row, and I know ahead of time that I will never, ever, hit that mark, do I quit? Absolutely not, because (again) the analysis becomes an infinite regression! How close can I come to within a ball's width of the head rail, on five consecutive shots? That, then, becomes the "challenge," and "winning" becomes redefined in my own mind.

If I define "winning" as being able to run 300 balls in straight pool, and the chances are infinitesimal that I will ever achieve such a goal, do I still strive for it? Or do I simply quit, because today I cannot run 300 balls? If I have the advance knowledge that "300" simply is never going to happen in my lifetime, do I quit the game, or do I practice each and every day in order to see how close I can get to that -- *a priori* -- illusive number of 300? The answer is obvious: I practice each and every day and chart my progress. And, by the way, as *definitionally* delusional as this is [given the parameters of your hypothetical], I will convince myself that I will hit the 300 mark one day.

"Charting one's progress" becomes the new definition of "success," albeit not "winning." If it is no longer an issue of a personal best, and we return to competing against real, live, human beings, then the words of wisdom kick in for me. The mere fact that I can play on the same table as an Allison Fisher, or a Tom Rossman, even though one might say I have no chance of "winning" or "beating" either one... the mere fact that I can rack the balls for them is an honor for me. I don't say this to flatter you; I say it because it is true. It is an issue of serving the masters.

A batboy retrieves Babe Ruth's discarded bat, after the Sultan of Swat belts out home run number 387. The batboy is serving the master. He has a part in the game. A better analogy would be the pitcher. The pitcher serves up the home run ball. But without the pitcher, Babe Ruth has nothing to swing at. They both honor the game they both love. But if the pitcher knows -- from the time he is in the minor leagues -- that he is the one who will throw the record-breaking home run pitch to Hank Aaron, does he give up his dream of pitching in the major leagues? You get to pitch in the show, but you will suffer the ultimate humiliation of giving up that record breaking home run pitch to Hank Aaron. You still wanna play, kid?

What was the name of the basketball team that had to go up against the Harlem Globetrotters and lose each and every game during the tour? They still played, didn't they? Without them, do the Harlem Globetrotters continue to play ball? I mean, if there is no team for them to beat -- another variation on your theme -- do the Globetrotters continue to play ball? Of course they do, because they can still do their "magic circle," passing the ball between their legs, behind their back, around their arms and chest, to their other teammates.

Let's get back to my playing pool and never "winning" again. The answer lies, of course, in your "words of wisdom." To win is great. But that is now simply out of the question, given the hypothetical. To play is greater. Even if I know in advance I'll never beat Efren Reyes in a race to nine in nine-ball, I'll still be there to lag for the break and rack the balls nine times in a row, simply to serve the master and observe him work his craft. Even if I don't get a shot, I'll serve the game I love by participating up close.

To love is the greatest. If Efren treats me like a dog, it's game over. Let him rack his own balls, I'm out. If my opponent disrespects me, I'm done. I'll take a beating, as long as I am not abused in the process. If there is no love, then there is no game and there is no "winning," because I am a dust cloud billowing out behind my heels opposite the direction I am running out of the pool hall forever.

That is my best answer, off the top of my head. An amazingly superb question, even though you supplied the keys to my answer in advance of asking the question itself!

Additional Excerpts On This Topic From Stephen Email Of 12/28/14 9:05AM:

If I had to crystallize the entire concept into one phrase, it would be: "count your blessings." That is what I get out of it. From my own perspective, this applies to my avocation ("shooting pool") as well as to my vocation ("practicing law").

Mike Ditka, in his later years coaching the Bears, would often compare football to life. It got to the point where he would be parodied for it. But somehow, if one does not draw life lessons from both one's chosen profession as well as the activities in which one engages during his "down time," in my opinion, that person is not living his life in full. As a former high school English teacher often admonished her "a. p." honors students: "don't go through life having the experience, but missing the meaning."

But I have digressed. "To win is great" applies to life in general, and to my avocation in particular. The problem is, in my profession as a civil litigation attorney, should a case not be settled prior to judgment, by definition: one side will win -- one side will lose. If I am retained on an hourly basis, then I will get paid to fight in court, win or lose. If I take a case on a contingent fee basis, I will not get paid unless I win. Sometimes, the two forms of compensation can be combined, where I am paid an hourly fee, coupled with a bonus if I win.

"To play is greater" to me means I should be thankful if I still have my mental and physical faculties that enable me to continue in my chosen profession. These gifts come from God, and in all things I need to honor Him. The minute I forget this, or am distracted by the enemy, or otherwise fail to conduct myself in the proper manner, these gifts with which I have been blessed will erode. It is a very real, and a very sobering concept. The word "play" in this context, as well as in any other, must embody the concept of "playing with integrity," otherwise the entire construct falls apart.

"To love is the greatest." In my profession, one must "love" all facets, which maintain our civil society. Shakespeare, in Henry VI, had one of his characters utter the famous line: "The first thing we do is kill all the lawyers." It is a humorous line, as it expresses the public's general frustration with lawyers. However, the character, Henry the Butcher, was conspiring to overthrow the king. He knew, inherently, that if you first kill all the lawyers, then the civil society would break down. Loving "the rule of law" is just one aspect. "The law" needs to be tempered by "equity," or what is fair. There have to be checks and balances in place. "Justice" must be tempered by a sense of grace, as well. If, God forbid, some day I should lack the mental acuity or the physical ability to practice law, my prayer is I never lose my sense of what is fundamentally "right" and "wrong."

Excerpt from 1 Corinthians 13:13 (KJV) – "...but the greatest of these is Love."

The good news is, I am learning to recognize these "victories in disguise" by simply telling myself that (1) I need to focus on playing the game, and not my opponent; (2) my opponent has to be good to beat me, and deserves to win his share of games; and probably most importantly (3) every "paper loss" is an opportunity for me to become more humble, as humility is a virtue I need to strive for.

On this last point... the funny thing is... when I do win, ***that*** is the real time I need to keep #3 in mind. **I have learned that I truly need to double my efforts to remain humble when I "win on paper."**

Topic Theme – Online APA Instructional Segment #40 – Enjoy The Roll!

Topic Comments: (as presented in an email from Stephen Saporta on 12/19/11):

Evidence of the existence of God is everywhere for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Men and women of faith, who have God foremost in their thoughts, see His divine presence in their everyday lives. There is, in fact, an intelligent design. A modern day philosopher, Depak Chopra, once expressed the following thought: if one considers an atom, one marvels at what keeps the electrons orbiting around the nucleus. Chopra described it as an inherent intelligence in the space between the electrons and the nucleus. The law of entropy (randomness) would dictate the electrons would go flying off in all directions, but there is something that keeps them in orbit around the nucleus. The analogy extends to the planets and the stars. There is an innate intelligence in the space between which keeps the planets in orbit.

Einstein, who released the incredibly powerful energy of the atom by splitting it, realized its terribly destructive potential. His discoveries could not be possible without at least a rudimentary understanding of the language of mathematics. While not a particularly strong mathematician, Einstein was an incredible physicist. He saw the hand of God in both mathematics and physics. It is unclear to me whether it was his Jewish Faith which lead him to this recognition or his science that lead him to a belief in God. What I do know is he saw God in his scientific observations. Einstein is reported to have said: "God does not throw dice with the universe."

So, it is against this backdrop that I come to Rossman's Lesson #40 from the APA Channel on YouTube. Here is a man, a self-proclaimed "Doctor of Billiardology," who has spent the greater part of his adult life working extremely hard at play. From what I have observed, he has had an epiphany that he has been able to encapsulate in his Lesson #40.

Just as Einstein saw the hand of God in his discoveries, so has Rossman. As if through the eyes of a child, "Dr. Cue"® takes us through his Lesson #40, full of wonder and delight in his tactile, aural and visible observations of both his cue stick and a handful of billiard balls, as he rolls all across the smooth felt surface of his pool table. This is no small matter, for it is through his appreciation of the miraculous that we, too, if we pay close attention, can see the hand of God Himself. The wonderment is truly that of a child – a child of God! Scripture teaches us that those who come to the kingdom of heaven must do so with the faith of a child.

Child psychology tells us that soon after an infant is able to see, he or she begins to observe his or her environment. It is at this early cognitive stage that the infant views objects within his or her field of vision. Rossman demonstrates this by asking us to appreciate the innate beauty in a billiard ball rolling across the felt of a pool table. He asks us to look upon it again with a childlike fascination. In this early stage of development, if an object is removed from the infant's field of vision, to the infant's mind, the object has "disappeared." It is no more. It has ceased to exist.

The next stage of cognitive development for the infant is when he or she realizes he or she has an impact on his or her environment. This, too, is demonstrated by Rossman in his very act of rolling the cue stick back and forth, rolling the billiard balls across the felt, clicking them together in his hands, and by rolling them into the pockets of the table by striking them directly with his cue stick.

But then, an unexpected and amazing thing happens. The billiard balls, pocketed one at a time, disappear from view, one at a time. This is, of course, is the object of the game – to pocket billiard balls. Rossman, to his credit, reminds us that once the billiard ball is removed from the playing surface, we can no longer enjoy the beauty of its roll. The ball has disappeared from view, and as far as the game is concerned, it has ceased to exist.

How does one reconcile the object of the game with this inherent loss of the aesthetic? It is an issue I struggled with for some time after viewing Lesson #40. I believe I have discovered the answer. One must keep in mind the absolute beauty of the rolling cue ball. Another very important object of the game is to keep the cue ball on the playing surface, for if it should ever disappear from view, it is indeed a tragedy. Playing position, therefore, to the advanced player enhances the game in a fundamental manner that pocketing balls never can; the aesthetic of the rolling cue ball remains in full view. It is in this way that the aesthetic remains consistent with pocketing object balls. **Three cushion billiards, of course, never loses the aesthetic of the rolling spheres, as each remains on the playing surface, and therefore within the player's field of vision, throughout the game.**

Observing the physics of striking the cue ball with one's cue stick, the physics of the balls as they collide with each other as well as the cushions, learning the various diamond systems and the like, one sees the intelligence and order behind it all. One sees the Hand of God at work. And when one becomes proficient to the point where his results can be recorded, explained and replicated, he gains an appreciation for his impact upon his environment, and it is in accord with the constancy of the universe.

Special Saporta Summation: I suppose it boils down to what a poet once said: "Learn to treat winning and losing equally, as the impostors they are." Appreciating the aesthetics of the game is not inconsistent with winning.

Topic Theme – Kicking System Application With Ketchup And A Napkin

Topic Comments: (as presented in an email from Stephen Saporta on 11/28/12):

Last night I was in a dogfight in the last match of our Tuesday night league. Of the two teammates of mine who chose to stick around, one was at the bar and one was keeping score. The scorekeeper and his lady friend watched in amazement as I pulled off a truly remarkable shot. My opponent, and two of his teammates looked on in horror as I kicked in a nine ball frozen against the long rail, just north of the side pocket, running it past the side pocket and down to the corner pocket, leaving the cue in line to pocket the eight in the opposite corner pocket for the win.

I immediately went over to my teammate and exclaimed: "*That was 'Dr. Cue'® Rossman's method in practice, baby!*" I had previously shown your method to this particular teammate in weeks past, so he knew what I was talking about. After my match, I demonstrated the technique to the teammate of mine, who was at the bar and did not witness the shot.

I just wanted to tell you I was thrilled to make this shot utilizing your method. By the way, I must admit I have missed these types of shots in the past because I was not properly employing your technique. I had been choosing the "midpoint" as the midpoint between the cue ball and the object ball, rather than the cue ball and the imaginary "ghost" ball. I have learned from experience that this adjustment makes all the difference! Last night, I found myself making this necessary correction / adjustment before executing the shot. I hope I never forget the "midpoint" has to be between the cue ball and the ghost ball, not the cue ball and the object ball.

Anyway, I went on to "victory" and our team also ended up "victorious," with a 4-1 win. Thank you so much for this bit of knowledge. This gem has paid off in the form of "legal" hits many times in the past, and a "miraculous" shot last night.

Follow Up Story: It's funny! I charted this out for my captain this past Sunday, and remembered the ghost ball. Here is my captain, minding his own business, eating some French Fries with ketchup. I take his napkin, and dot it with six spots of ketchup, in the pattern of the six pockets of the pool table. I then make two more dots, designating the cue ball and the object ball. I then licked the ketchup from my fingertip. (I'm 51 years old....) The poor guy! I then take the straw out of his drink, and use it to point out the "mirror image" pocket (point) and the "midpoint" between the cue ball and the ghost ball. The straw then became a mini cue stick, and I demonstrated the parallel shift concept and how this method shows the player the theoretical angle of incidence, etc. This rather sloppy improvisation on Sunday night reminded me of that ghost ball, and somehow it became imprinted on my brain, because I remembered it last night.

“Dr. Cue”® Note: The “Mirror Image” (M) & “Midpoint” (M) System is the foundation for bank shots and the 7th Pocket System is the foundation for one-cushion kick shots. For more information on these valuable systems, please contact “Dr. Cue”® via email: drcue@artisticpool.org

VICTORY NUGGETS – GAME AND LIFE ENHANCEMENTS

What follows is an assortment of “game enhancing” factors that may or may not have been mentioned already in some of the “Dr. Cue”® articles presented in this work (pages 6 – 35). I believe it is essential to reinforce some points again, because of their foundational associations. Application of these items is paramount to a solid performance level; however, the overall theme for them relates to what one can do in “human” terms ONLY – to take one’s game to the next level and beyond.

In 1984, I experienced a victory vision named RACK (Recreational Ambassadors For Christ’s Kingdom) in my personal game and life journey. I searched for and acquired an understanding of this very important “life enhancing” revelation, how it can be applied to the overall “game,” and how it can provide special victories both on and off the table, regardless of paper score and human reasoning. This “spiritual connection” provided an opportunity for any “student of the game and life” to witness personal transformation via a new “life” and a new “game”! For three decades, I saw amazing effects to personal “life” fulfillment and “game” achievement, as countless numbers of students (and teachers) attached to this “spiritual victory nugget” – embracing a higher purpose “message of the Cross” by faith, with the Holy Spirit working in a myriad of “amazing grace” ways – joy and peace abounding!!

FOR “GAME” ENHANCEMENT:

Muscle Memory Development / Mechanical Effectiveness

- This is an instructional process that will help you correct ANY errors of alignment, stroke and / or jumping up as you hit the ball. Use a full-length wall mirror with a small table in front of it, or use the mirror on your bedroom dresser, to observe yourself during this process. First, take your stance and observe your cue stick as a “plumb bob” under your shoulder. Continue adjustments in “taking your stance” until you get the “visual vertical” confirmation you are seeking of your cue in relation to your shoulder. Second, start your stroke motions. You will immediately notice ANY GLITCH you might have when you stroke your cue (at different speeds) back and forth in front of the mirror. As you watch yourself do the things you shouldn’t be doing, you can use the visual feedback to adjust from stroke to stroke to “not do the wrong thing any longer.” This is guaranteed to fix any glitch you may have and to “teach yourself” how to stroke better. The best way to relate to this is when a person shaves in a mirror and gets each whisker that one sees in the process. When each “billiard whisker” is removed from your stroke movement, so to speak, you will have a VERY CLEAN game and can see it before you ever go back to the table again. This “mirror image” process can also correct movements of the upper body before, during, and after your follow through.

Dedicate five minutes a day in front of a mirror for one week, and watch your game improve to another level of excellence / achievement.

- To help make a shot that is literally missed, a player should practice by shortening the shot at the same angle. Find an acceptable “shorter distance” until a 90% make rate is achieved! Then, move the cue ball back two inches while seeking another 90% make rate. Continue to move in two-inch increments until desired make rates are achieved from the original position where the shot was literally missed. You will see a much higher make rate now using this process of correction, gaining shot-making confidence along the way.

- To achieve professional mechanics / fundamentals, “isolate” specific points of practice to their most basic components. For example, if you want to perfect a 100% chalking process so critical to a professional pre-shot routine, set up a cue ball only (can be done anywhere), stand behind it and chalk. Put the chalk down and take your stance. Get back up and repeat the process again. Do for five minutes / day for three days to lock it in! This “isolation” technique can be used for ANY mechanic / fundamental that you want to display as professional. Looking like a pro will win a fair share of games for you!!
- I would like to share the aiming technique my wife, Marty (“Ms. Cue”) uses. First, visualize a straight line to the pocket for the object ball. Second, imagine this line coming back straight through the object ball to a “point of contact.” This is where the cue ball must contact the object ball to make it. Third, place the cue tip on the cloth directly under this point, in line with the pocket. Fourth, pull the cue tip back 1 & 1/8 inches (half the width of a cue ball). Fifth, apply a little pressure on the cue stick and swivel over to the cue ball center. This establishes the line the cue ball must travel to the object ball to make it, using vertical tip placement on the cue ball. Sixth, shoot the cue ball down this straight line! This “Ms. Cue” aiming / shooting system is very simple and produces great results!

Note: For “cut shots” greater than 30 degrees, factors of throw will affect the accuracy of the shot. English application (lateral spin) also affects the result. The “Ms. Cue” aiming system applies to ALL shots, with a “cut angle” generally up to 30 degrees, without lateral spin being applied. Use the “Ms. Cue” aiming / shooting system accordingly and with confidence!!

Game Dynamics / Player Relationships / Affirmations / Perceptions

- At one of the “Dr. Cue”[®] events in Pueblo, CO, I was playing an 8 – ball game with a very good player and friend by the name of Larry Higgs. The shot before me looked impossible – completely blocked, needing a difficult long distance jump coupled with low percentage position on the 8-ball. I looked at Larry and with a friendly smile told him: “You can’t leave me this shot – this is my favorite shot.” My right brain engaged with a “mouse trap” game image of the shot, and then executed it to perfection. Larry and I are still friends, but ALL of us still remember that amazing “Kodak moment.” Over the years, I have watched players put their cue tip or finger at a point on the table they want the cue ball to land for position with perfect results for them as well! I believe the nature of what happens is highly dependant on repetitive “belief” in the attempted shot (no matter how difficult) to be your “favorite shot.” The left brain hears those words (instead of having a tizzy fit) and gets out of the way for the right brain to perform flawlessly without any effort or interference. I have said the “favorite shot” quip hundreds of times since 1984 when I had a “renewal of spirit” in my life, and I have seen phenomenal “game” things happen that defy billiard strategies and normalcy.

Follow Up Note: I was watching a golf tournament on TV recently and witnessed this trusting of an image implant by a professional golfer. He ended up on the desert surface next to some bushes on two different holes with almost impossible shots. An analytical review of each shot (left brain) was difficult at best, as confirmed by TV commentators. You could see him stand back – burning the image of a potential shot in his mind (right brain). Then it happened, he took an awkward stance next to the bushes and let it go! This obvious right-brain trust worked with two awesome “hole - saving” shots! Amazing! I can only wonder if he might have said internally for each shot: “You can’t leave me this one – this is my favorite shot”!

- Understanding how conditioned “perceptions” can become catalysts for one’s approach to our game and fellow players is critical to become a better player. I suggest that each “student of the game and life” reread this manual’s article entitled “The Perception Of Winning” (page 10). Positive and constructive discussions on game and life topics will become the norm once it is understood how “perceptions” can be right or wrong, depending on a myriad of factors. Game and player harmony will ensue with this knowledge!

Follow Up Note: Perception starts with an act or process of perceiving (actual sensing – see, hear, feel, taste, smell). The result or product of perceiving something over and over again becomes engrained in the mind (right brain only) as the “thing to do.” Some of these items are losing, winning, making, and missing for pool players. Driving on the right side of the road in the United States and the left side of the road in England are examples. The language a person learns follows a similar thread of logic. For example, a baby born in the United States, who grows up in France will probably speak French; conversely, a baby born in France, who grows up in the United States is likely to speak English. The awareness, insight, or information gained by a long-term implant to the mind and emotions create behavioral patterns that are deeply seated and often difficult to reprogram, if need be. Repetitious implants that are done image by image, sound by sound, etc., using simple points of training, will help any person achieve a new perception for the desired goal. Proof in point is when you literally show an 8-ball to a person long enough, they will know what an 8 – ball looks like, using the mind’s eye when taken out of view. Frequent left-brain sensory conditioning / training will set and release right-brain sensory implants; therefore, training with high quality / desired input will produce high quality / desired output in your game!

- “Not looking or acting like a professional” can affect the outcome of a match before it begins, as well as during the heat of battle. In addition, when the match is over, a player can often portray non-professional traits. In today’s high tech world, looking down is the norm – very often players will come to the match more concerned with a last message being read than the joy of meeting / playing the person before them – sidetracked, so to speak, and psychologically not prepared for the job at hand.
- Other factors of professional image and performance deal with “how a person walks” normally – a top player will walk with his or her stroking arm in a back and forth motion directly under his or her shoulder, which conditions the “cue under the shoulder” when the arm holds / moves it during a respective shot.
- Another mechanical factor deals with the back foot movement after the stance is first taken. Seeing the rear foot shift parallel to the cue stick assures balance without changing the “plumb bob” of the cue stick under the shoulder. On the other hand, a perpendicular movement of the rear foot in relation to the cue stick can quickly alter the potential for a straight cue stick release, since the “plumb bob” is affected negatively.
- Inverting the chalk (well down) on the rail surface is a sign of improper pre-shot routine development. Not only is this a foundational flaw, it is also commonly regarded as an etiquette shortcoming.
- Finally, after the match is over, one can quickly determine whether he or she has played a person with professional demeanor and a personal spirit of kindness as they: “Win with humility (and grace) and / or lose with integrity (and grace)”!

RECAP NOTES: The mechanical, etiquette, demeanor, image factors (last five points) directly above can set the stage for a psychological uplift to an watchful player, one who is a student of the game and knows what to “look for” with a resolve to learn and grow. If an opponent is “not looking / acting like a professional,” watch your confidence rise – if an opponent “looks like a pro,” then it reinforces the need to remain focused on, and entrenched in, your best behavior!

Special Game Considerations

- To help lessen the chances of a literal miss on a “game-winning” ball, one should play easy position on an imaginary ball when playing the final ball. For example, in a game of 8-ball with 15 balls on the table, the intent is to shoot 7 balls with position each time. In most cases, the brain shifts to result mode on the 8-ball and simply tries to make it without attaching to another part of the normal process. 1,000 games of 8-ball calculate to 7,000 balls shot with position and 1,000 balls (8-ball) with a result only goal in the mind. The right brain experiences a short circuit, so to speak, since 87.5% of the balls are shot with position included “in the process,” while 12.5% are shot in an attempt to win “out of the process” and in “result mode only,” which causes undue physical / mental stress! Winning should be an afterthought, not a forethought!!
- When a newborn baby encounters pool balls rolling over and over again, the developing brain absorbs the “beautiful colors” and “gentle clicks” of the spheres in motion. The eyes and ears open wide to “enjoy the newfound” learning process! As the child gets older, this special attachment to the “sights and sounds” becomes a conditioned comfort zone and expectant result. Then, one day a ball disappears in a pocket! This is when the trouble starts, so to speak, since the youthful observer will soon learn what a “miss” is – a void of the joy experienced prior to that fateful occasion. The child reaches out in an inquisitive manner, often with frustration, to somehow fix the problem. For a long period of time, a ball or balls not going in (literally made) was just fine – the child enjoyed every roll, every color, and every click! These tangible factors were the “make” for the child – a “first love,” so to speak. Anything other than these “first love” attributes for the child create confusion, frustration, and struggle. Each of us started out with the subliminal attraction of the “sights and sounds” of the balls rolling across the playfield – we experienced a “first love” that justified our playing in the first place. When we started to make balls, then more – but “never enough” – we became confused and frustrated. We struggled when the goal of making balls was not achieved. At this critical game juncture we searched for answers / solutions to what had gone wrong! I suggest a simple yet effective way to reverse the downward spiral is to “return to your first love.” Start by referencing my article on page 21 and watch my online APA Segment #40 on You Tube. Then, apply the simple practice exercise presented in my article on page 16.
- Simplify your practice routines: use the shot – making practice exercise described in the article on page 16 to develop confidence, as balls are literally made over and over again! In similar manner, start with simple safeties, simple position shots, simple banks, simple kicks, simple jumps, and simple masse shots. Increase the difficulty of each type of practice exercise in small stages until another level of confidence is reached and so on. If you play with someone “new” to the game, who may struggle with mechanics and much more, don’t hesitate to reduce the requirements for “how the game is normally played” to help him or her “enjoy the roll” more and gain personal confidence right where he or she is in the game.
- **Train your brain to put your mind and body “in the zone”!** A great right-brain training exercise (to acquire what most refer to as “Dead Stroke”) is to shoot “Wing Shots” – hitting balls in motion, in an attempt to pocket them – like shooting at clay pigeons in an attempt to break them. Almost everyone thinks it is very difficult to become consistent at this. In essence, it is easy to do when practice is broken down to specific components of exercise in an effort to master each part. The cue ball and object ball should both start in the hand for each roll. First, roll 100 object balls to a designated area until “rolling the object ball” is mastered. Do not release the cue ball from your hand on each roll! Then, roll 100 object balls, place the cue ball on the table, and position the body until “a proper stance” is mastered. Finally, roll the object ball, place the cue ball on the table, position the body, and shoot the rolling object ball using a trust that the brain knows “when and how” to shoot. The brain will adjust automatically for errant shots, as long as the player doesn’t dwell on something perceived as wrong!

Applying Left-Brain Senses And Right-Brain Senses With Clarity

- “90% of The Game is Half Mental.” – Yogi Berra
- “All of The Game is 100% Engrained Perception.” – “Dr. Cue”®

SPECIAL NOTE: I had been teaching the mental game for decades when a close friend of mine named Rob Dickman from Canon City, CO, gave me a small ceramic brain with distinct, colorful lines on the outside depicting its two primary sides. The left side and right side were simple in design, which reminded me to present the amazing nature of the overall brain functions in an easy to understand manner. In this regard, I suggest that each person reading this section do a dedicated and repetitious review of the five “Mental Process Theme” articles on pages 12 – 16 of this manual. Coupled with the information in this section, I am confident that you will achieve a thorough understanding of how both sides of the brain are supposed to work in harmony with each other so that you might achieve a “mental victory” both on and off the table. The brain has ten specific and primary senses, as follows:

Five Left-Brain Senses (LBS): Analytical Nature (Point-By-Point; Step-By-Step)

Sight (physical sense with eyes) – See aiming / alignment lines, balls, pockets, cue stick, etc.

Sound (physical sense with ears) – Hear tip hitting ball, clicking and dropping of balls, etc.

Feeling (physical sense with hands, etc) – Feel cue sensation through hands / arms to brain

Taste (physical sense with mouth) – Taste food / drink – Luther Lassiter (nicknamed “Wimpy”) ate hot dogs like “Wimpy” in Popeye eating hamburgers – played often better as he “tasted” each shot, so to speak, in a flavor – associated comfort zone

Smell (physical sense with nose) - Smell odors - personally I love the smell of popcorn popping, so if that scenario exists, I “smell” each shot, so to speak, in an odor – associated comfort zone.

Note: These senses develop the foundation of our game point-by-point – which create the perception of an: act / process / situation / environment (often with emotional attachment).

Five Right-Brain Senses (RBS): Free Flowing (Automatic Release; “Dead Stroke”)

Sight (Mental implant to “mind’s eye” seeing all in its entirety before shot) – then releasing!

Sound (Mental implant to audio banks before shot) – then releasing!

Feeling (Mental implant to tactile endings which allows feel before shot) – then releasing!

Taste (Mental implant of eating flavors before shot) – then releasing!

Smell (Mental implant of odor factors before shot) – then releasing!

Notes: These implanted / engrained senses are released automatically after significant programming and/or conditioning of act / process / situation via repetition and “perfect” practice. These senses see, hear, feel, taste, and smell, but do not “focus” like the left brain, but rather “observe” something happening (from the sidelines, so to speak). These senses do not care if something is “right or wrong,” but will “short circuit” if something is done that is outside the conditioned / programmed act / process, situation it has learned from long effort / implant.

Literal makes and literal misses can both be OK to the right brain, if conditioned and programmed by the left brain! My article on page 10 will provide clarity on this subject, plus my article on page 12 will explain how to deprogram a literal miss into a literal make!

When applied to practice routines, dozens of EASY left-brain exercises will produce consistent “make” implants to the right brain, which will establish higher confidence levels for your game!

FOR “LIFE” ENHANCEMENT (GAME ENHANCEMENT BONUS):

Spiritual – Life Transforming Attributes For Total / Complete Victory

As “students of the game...and life,” we often search for silver bullets or special pills to cure things that are perceived as problems or interference. Self-effort to discover specific solutions can quickly come up empty handed. The good news is that there is a “perfect” remedy to what ails you...and your game. AND, it can be activated within you! This guaranteed “way to victory” both on and off the table is a “gift” to you – simply for the asking!!

Perfect Remedy (Spiritual Connection) – The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, His burial, and His miraculous resurrection provided a special “victory” over “the works of the devil” and / or the things that plague us in life. This great “triumph” over sin, curses, poverty, sickness, oppression, condemnation, and much more glorified the brilliance and supremacy of God and His supernatural nature that: 1) knows everything (omniscient), 2) has unlimited power (omnipotent), and 3) is with us at all times (omnipresent) – through the losing and the winning; through the making and the missing; through the good times and the not-so-good times.

After being around pool for almost 20 years, I was searching for a better game and a better life. God was trying to get my attention through people and circumstances that: 1) a belief in (having faith), 2) an acceptance of, and 3) a focus on...the “message of the Cross” (Jesus Christ and Him Crucified) was worth considering. In 1977, I took a step of faith to accept the “gift,” but I did not “focus on the TOTAL message of the Cross.” I asked for, and received forgiveness for all of my sins by the “atoning work” of Jesus Christ on the Cross. I knew that I was “saved” by believing and by accepting Jesus Christ, as my personal Lord and Savior, and that I would go to heaven. My lack of focus on the Cross – beyond Salvation – did not give the Holy Spirit (within me) the latitude to work in my life for a complete “victory” walk, and all that God had in store for me. I continued to struggle, perceived many problems, and couldn’t seem to “get my act” together.

In 1984 the RACK Vision appeared before my very eyes! I rededicated my life focus on the “total” Cross message for not only Salvation, but also what is called Sanctification – a minute by minute pruning by God, so to speak, of our walk via the power of the Holy Spirit. God started to work in miraculous ways in my life journey and consequently, the passion I had for pool was given a jump-start to come alive! God brought my wife, Marty (Ms. Cue) into my life and an amazing journey started both on and off the table. “Amazing” does not seem like the proper word to describe what God has done, but for over 30 years now, our journey continues with a focus on the message of the Cross allowing the Holy Spirit to work in special and miraculous ways.

While the “burning focus” explained in the “mental process” article on page 13 pertains to the game, a focus on the “message of the Cross” pertains to “life” via the Holy Spirit. Having your personal life in order with a focus in the proper place will produce awesome by-products for your game and much more! When you take the first step to believe and accept the spiritual “victory gift” in your life, and then apply the proper focus, God will work through the Holy Spirit to order all of your other steps: work, relationships, recreational pursuits (including pool) and much more, in ways you have never dreamed possible. **Perceived problems will still exist, but a faith focus on the complete victory at the Cross will carry you through each valley or rough sea in life!**

Note: You can read all about the RACK (Recreational Ambassadors For Christ’s Kingdom) Vision and more “victory” items at:

<http://www.drcuepromotions.com/outreach-vision-witness/>

I believe in and propose the following umbrella formula for life and game success:

***Heart / Life (Holy Spirit Senses) + Mental Game (Left / Right Brain Senses) = Complete Victory
“On and Off” The Table – Allowing A Person To “Play With The True Heart Of A Champion”!***

I do not want to minimize the senses the Holy Spirit might use in a person’s life as they are unlimited and supernatural in nature, but I would like to show a relationship of how the Holy Spirit MIGHT work through us via the primary mental senses / process explained on page 46.

Five Spirit Heart Senses (SHS): Applications Of Holy Spirit – allow right / left-brain senses to operate in a special “fruit of the Spirit” association with: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control:

- Sight (Holy Spirit helping us to see things He wants us to see though our eyes)
- Sound (Holy Spirit helping us to hear things He wants us to hear through our ears)
- Feeling (Holy Spirit helping us to feel things He wants us to feel though our hands, etc.)
- Taste (Holy Spirit helping us to taste things He wants us to taste through our mouth)
- Smell (Holy Spirit helping us to smell things He wants us to smell through our nose)

Note: These senses are reflected in Biblical verses that have the potential to transform one’s mind, heart, and perception of the world. This enables one to become not only a complete player / person, but also a true professional in one’s game and life! In addition, God will manifest Himself in the works of our life by sharing the gifts and talents He has blessed us with. An exciting new outlook on our game and life will emerge as: “misses” become “makes in disguise”; “failures” become “successes in disguise”; “defeats” become “victories in disguise”; and “problems” become “solutions in disguise.”

From time to time throughout this instructional manual, I have referred to being “in dead stroke.” This phrase is common parlance in the world of pool and billiards, and has even given rise to all manner of “death images” (skulls, skeletons, etc.) being imprinted on everything from t-shirts, to cue sticks, to hats, etc. Let me suggest an alternative phrase and message! When our left brain performs its analytical function with the help of the Holy Spirit senses, and when our right brain performs its free-flowing function with the help of the Holy Spirit senses, I would suggest we are not “in dead stroke,” but rather, are truly, and joyously, ALIVE, as God intended. Our performance becomes effortless, as our “alive stroke” becomes manifest and released from shot-to-shot, game-to-game, and match-to-match! Our left and right brain function in perfect harmony, and the results we experience are truly the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This allows a “victory mode” regardless of circumstances – happiness is a matter of the latter – joy is a matter of life overall with Christ in our heart! God created the left and right brain -- influenced by life experiences. It is up to us, whether we share these circumstances with God and enjoy our “victory roll” or we live without God, and try to get by on our own “self-effort.”

Psalms 33:3 (NKJV) – “Play Skillfully With A Shout Of Joy.”

All Senses Working Together: Hebrews 5:14 (NKJV) – “But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

Sense Of Sight: Ephesians 1:18 (NKJV) – “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling; and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”

Sense Of Sound: Matthew 13:43 (NKJV) – “Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Sense Of Smell: 2 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV) – “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”

Sense Of Feeling: Matthew 9:21 (NKJV) – For she said to herself, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.”

Sense Of Taste: Psalms 34:8 (NKJV) – “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”

Stewardship Principle of Ownership – Caretakers, Not Owners

Psalm 24:1 (NKJV) – “The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.”

Generic Wisdom – All we own in human terms is on loan from God! (Apply to article on page 21.)

Tithing Principle / Blessings / Provisions

Proverbs 3:9,10 (NKJV) – “Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.”

Malachi 3:10 (KJV) – “Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house, and prove Me now herewith, says the Lord of hosts; if I will not open you the Windows of Heaven, and pour you out a Blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Special Quote (Edgar Allen, Founder of Easter Seals): “Your life and mine shall be valued not by what we take, but by what we give.”

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) – “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Special Nugget for Life: We can be tired, weary, and emotionally distraught, but after spending time alone with God, we find that He injects into our bodies energy, power, and strength. God’s spiritual dynamics are at work in our inner beings, refreshing and energizing our minds and spirits, while the body goes along for the ride. Note – The energy for my presentations comes from this!

Meditation Principles And Prayer – Time With God!

Psalm 62:5 (NKJV) – “My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him.”

- “The time of meditation is God’s time of equipping us in preparation for life.” (Charles Stanley, Pastor / In Touch Ministries – Atlanta, GA)
- Meditation produces peace, a positive attitude, personal intimacy, purification, and a passion for obedience.

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) – “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted on the earth”!

- When we become still before the Lord, gradually the competing elements of life ebb away.

Isaiah 30:15 (KJV) – For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; “In returning and rest shall you be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength, and you would not.”

- Silence and seclusion before God will allow Him to speak to our hearts clearly, positively, and unmistakably.
- Focusing attention on God can help believers go to sleep, peaceful and relaxed, despite the difficulties of the day.

Proverbs 8:34 (NKJV) – “Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.”

- God is, above all else, interested in the position of our hearts, and not our bodies.

James 4:10 (NKJV) – “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

Mark 1:35 (NKJV) – “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.”

Final Note: Meditation and prayer is simply a matter of spending our time in rich fellowship with our personal Lord and Savior. When I practiced for the ESPN events, I started each session with prayer, meditation, and reading from the Bible – then, and only then, I practiced at the table!



~ IN YOUR LIFE AND GAME ~



Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) – “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

The RACK Vision revealed in 1984 has its primary focus on the “message of the Cross” (Jesus Christ and Him Crucified) for “billiard” domain teaching, edifying, and sharing. Those presenting its visionary points, personal testimony, and “gospel message” are dear brothers and sisters in Christ, that, for the most part, are players and support friends with a common goal of reaching the lost and hurting in the “billiard” industry. God has also allowed me to teach players of regular Soccer and Touchball (a Soccer variation game) in the Philippines, plus the Fencing team of Scott Pruiksma’s daughter in New Jersey. Scott, Mike Massey, and “Dr. Cue”[®] were members of the first Gospel Trick Shot Ministries (GTSM) / RACK team to the Philippines under the leadership of the GTSM founder, Steve Lillis. The Macmillan Dictionary defines “recreational” as – refreshment by ANY form of amusement, relaxation, or diversion; therefore, the RACK Vision has unlimited potential to reach ANY and ALL “recreational” fields of endeavor worldwide!

Matthew 9:37 (NKJV) – “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”

Vision Story And More – <http://www.drcuepromotions.com/outreach-vision-witness/>



Rodney Fontaine Victory Articles (Also found online at drcuepromotions.com):

Thank you, Brother Rodney! The articles that follow will touch the hearts of many that read this manual. The combined "life and game" theme you reflect in them is a learning treasure indeed! Blessings to you and yours! "Dr. Cue"® and "Ms. Cue"

I AM A POOL PLAYING PREACHER!

I am a Preacher who plays pool. I got back into pool in 2008 by joining an APA league in Virginia. I met Tom Rossman and Steve Lillis through a series of supernatural events. Since then, I have become a part of Artistic Pool. I love God, pool, and pool players. The Lord put in my heart that "pool players need Jesus too," so I became a part of this wonderful sport, so I could help anyone who might need some prayer or encouragement.

I joined the APTSA (Artistic Pool and Trick Shot Association), and I want all of you to know that I consider myself an ambassador of Jesus Christ in the "artistic" world. I want to be there for all who participate in events. I am dedicating myself, even though I am not a top competitor, to be there for my fellow players and to hold this sport up in prayer for its success and future progress.

Ephesians 6:20 (KJV) – "For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Blessings to you all, Rodney "Triple P" Fontaine

January 2, 2012

UNITY AMONG PLAYERS!

As I thought and prayed about this month's encouraging word, the word "unity" came to mind. There is a teaching in the Word of God about the power of agreement. When two people agree, they are in "unity" on the matter.

Matthew 18:19 (AMP) – "Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree [harmonize together, make a symphony together] about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven."

As I thought about this, my mind went back to the Artistic Cup events I have participated in. I have enjoyed this part of my life tremendously, and I reflected on the "unity" among the players I saw in these events.

Make no mistake about it, these are competitions and for the top players there is a lot at stake. But what I saw was a group of people who were willing to help the players, who like myself, were struggling with some of the shots. I saw "unity" among a majority of the players and most of them were working together and agreeing with each other so the events would be a success.

When a group of people pulls together and work for a common goal, more can be accomplished. It's like a team of oxen or horses pulling together to move a heavy load. Usually a young ox is yoked together with an older, more experienced, ox so that the younger can learn how to pull in a team effort rather than to fight against the yoke. That's why the Bible asks the question, "How can two walk together except they agree"?

First, we need to yoke ourselves to the Lord in our personal lives and then we need to yoke ourselves together in unity so our great sport can succeed. We cannot afford to only think of ourselves, but we need to think about the success of the whole.

Let's use our God-given talents to promote unity among the players, integrity in our personal lives and let us be an example to the up and coming players. Let's leave a legacy that not only causes people to be remembered for their accomplishments on the table, but also for their lives away from the table.

Blessings to you all, Rodney "Triple P" Fontaine

February 5, 2012

HOW TO GUARANTEE A VICTORY IN YOUR LIFE!

"What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?" The answer is: **NOTHING**. The title of World Artistic Pool Champion, or World 9 Ball Champion, or any other title for that matter has no eternal value at all.

People play to win; at least most people play to win. We all try, but we can't ever guarantee that we will win, at least not on a pool table. We can practice for hours and days or weeks at a time and then get in a competition and lose every game or miss every shot. No one can predict that they will win every time.

We don't have absolute control over the outcome of any game where another individual is participating. "You win some and you lose some" is how it goes for anyone. But there is one thing in life that you can have complete control over and that is the state of your eternal soul. No one else can control the outcome of where you spend eternity but you.

You might ask: "How can I guarantee a win for my soul?" By giving your life to Jesus Christ! By giving your life to Him, you can have absolute "victory" in the most important game of your life. Give your game of life over to Him and He will guarantee that you will have the "victory."

Acts 2:21 (KJV) – "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

John 3:16 (KJV) – "For God so loved the world [including pool players], that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Note: Rodney adds the "Including pool players" text in the verse above for special effect!

Blessings to you all, Rodney "Triple P" Fontaine

April 26, 2012

BE THE LIGHT!

As I was reflecting on the reports that I received from Tom and Steve on the Philippines and China trip, I had this thought. These trips were for the furthering of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shedding the light of the gospel in spiritually dark places. In a similar way, we are trying to shed some light in people's minds about pool. People view pool in a negative way a lot of the time and, in some ways, people view Christianity in negative ways also.

What I mean by “shedding light” on something is that we show how a thing really is, instead of how it is perceived to be. When you mention poolrooms or billiard halls to people, they almost always think about something bad they have heard about. Our responsibility as Christians is to reveal what sin really is and what it really does to a person’s life. As pool players, we are trying to show that all pool players are not gambling drunks who cannot be trusted.

Pool is a great game that can be enjoyed by anyone and that is what we should project to the uninformed public. Sure there are those who still try to hustle people out of their money – just like the devil tries to hustle people out of the real life they could have in Jesus Christ.

Satan told Eve in the Garden of Eden: “You can eat the fruit and you won’t really die.” She didn’t immediately die physically, but she did die spiritually, because her sin separated her from God.

I am not trying to put pool playing on the same level as the Gospel, but I am just pointing out that many of us are trying to change the public’s image of pool and pool players. Some of us use our pool skills to convert sinners, but all of us should try to convert haters of the sport to lovers of the sport by being stand up people “on and off” the table.

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV) – “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Blessings to you all, Rodney “Triple P” Fontaine

July 19, 2012

BE THANKFUL!

Be thankful for what you have. As we approach another holiday season, with Thanksgiving upon us, I am compelled to be thankful. Thankful for my Lord Jesus first and foremost, my wonderful wife of 36 years, my sons, daughters, my grandchildren, my church family, and my friends (who includes those of you who are reading this). I am thankful that my path crossed each of yours.

From the moment I spoke to Marty Rossman at 11:00 p.m. in April of 2008, my life has been changed. She put me in touch with Tom that night and he put things into motion, that I still get blessed just thinking about. Because of Marty and Tom I met Steve Lillis, a man that I respect, admire and love. I have become friends with the Rossman's, who have stayed in my home and have blessed my family.

My first three-man team at my first cup was comprised of Chris Woodrum, Bill Meima, and myself. I knew from the moment I met you all that you were very special people, and I was thankful for the privilege of being around you crazy, Artistic Pool players. When you are thankful for someone or something, you appreciate it more.

Some of our pool families are going through things that at the moment seem impossible, but the Word tells us:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV) – “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Let’s show one another how thankful we are for being a part of this great sport by being kind to one another.

Blessings to you all, Rodney “Triple P” Fontaine

October 19, 2012

SPECIAL RACK ROOM “OUTREACH” REPORT!

This is a report for the Artistic Cup VI held on Nov. 29th – Dec. 2nd in Indianapolis, Indiana. There were twenty-six (26) players in attendance. This year there was a very casual, laid back atmosphere and the players had great fellowship and camaraderie.

The RACK Room fellowship was great. We had eight in attendance from the artistic group and two of the APA players came in and listened to the lesson. The topic shared by Rodney “Triple P” Fontaine was about the man who sold everything to buy a field where he found a treasure. It is a parable that Jesus taught his disciples.

Matthew 13:44 (NKJV) – “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

God has put this great gift of pool in us and He deserves for us to use it to advance His kingdom. The field is us, and the treasure is the gifts that the Lord knew were in us, so He gave His most valuable possession to purchase our salvation, and now we need to use our gift to advance His kingdom.

Those in attendance had a chance to express their thoughts about the lesson. Brother Tom Rossman shared about the trip to Honduras with Brother Curtis Robertson and how God orchestrated their time there. Brother Tony Williams, a friend of Brother Rodney shared how he saw the walls coming down and the gospel message taking a front seat within the billiard world in the future.

The Rack Room fellowship has proven to be an encouragement to those who attend. It is an honor to have the privilege of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the pool world.

Blessings to you all, Rodney “Triple P” Fontaine

December 20, 2012

THE GOD OF ANOTHER CHANCE!

Hi everyone from sunny Florida! As always, it is my great joy to share an encouraging word with you this month. The thought the Lord put on my heart this time came during Brother Tom's presentation the night before the Cup VI started. A couple of times when he would miss a shot he would jokingly say, "we even get two chances on ESPN." I thought to myself how thankful I am that God doesn't limit our chances to get things right. His grace and mercy is unlimited to us.

In our shot program, we get three chances to score points. With each miss, the point value decreases on the next shot. When God sees that we are trying to do right, and in our hearts we want to please Him, He works with us and He forgives our failures. The good news is, when He forgives, He forgets.

Psalms 103:12 (NKJV) – “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

God looks at our heart. He sees our intent, not just our actions. Back in the mid - 1990's, when my three sons were attending a very small Christian school, I started an archery team. We didn't have enough students to compete in many sports, but we had several dads who bow hunted. We had 16 kids from 5 to 15 sign up. Every Thursday for 12 weeks, each student shot 5 arrows at 5 targets for a total of 25 shots. Each target had 5 colors with scores ranging from 2 to 10 points. Beginners would miss everything and some would hit the bull's-eye. If a kid hit a bull's-eye, everyone knew because they would shout and jump in the air with excitement.

One little girl missed every target – every shot for several weeks. Then one evening she hit the two ring and you would've thought she hit 5 bull's-eyes in a row. As she and her dad were leaving, I heard her say: "Dad, that one bull's-eye made all those misses worth it." She scored hitting the two ring, but in her heart it was a 10-point bull's-eye.

On the way home that night, the Lord spoke to my heart: "Rodney, every time those kids release that arrow, in their hearts they are hitting that bull's-eye, even though they really don't hit it. And every time you miss it in life, because your heart is to hit the mark, I count it as a bull's-eye." You see, in our best effort we can't measure up, but God adds His Grace to it and He says it's enough. God bless you all, and remember, you never come out a loser when God is on your side.

Blessings to you all, Rodney "Triple P" Fontaine

February 26, 2013

"INTEGRITY" – ON AND OFF THE TABLE!

A game of 9-ball is underway between two men in an APA match. One is a skill level 4, who needs 31 points to win, and the other is a skill level 5, who needs 38 points to win. The match is neck and neck, but because the SL4 needs 7 less points, he has the advantage. The SL4 now only needs 2 points to win. The other SL5 walks over to another table to talk to someone while the SL4 is shooting. The table is beautifully laid out with the 6, 7, 8 & 9 balls in front of pockets. The SL4 lines up his shot on the 6 ball. He only needs to tap the 6 in with stop to be lined up for the 7 ball in the other corner pocket for the win. He is taking his practice strokes when the tip of his cue touches the cue ball. The SL5 has his back turned and doesn't see the foul. Nobody else notices it either.

Several things run through the player's mind. The cue ball didn't move, nobody saw it, the opposing player didn't see it, and he didn't call the foul, so what's the harm? The SL4 turns to his opponent and says, "I touched the cue ball with my tip." The opponent says, "I didn't see it, are you sure"? The SL4 says, "I fouled for sure." The SL5 now only needs 4 more points and the balls are still laid out beautifully. He takes ball in hand, makes three points, and misses.

The SL4 makes the 2 points he needs and wins the match. After the match, the SL5 walks up to his opponent and says: "You could've shot in the two balls you needed and never mentioned the foul, and I would've never known it."

"Yes, but I would've known it."

Integrity is doing the right thing when nobody is watching. We are trying to give integrity back to our sport. Let's do the right thing "on and off" the table and be an example of integrity all the time. Oh yeah, on the way home, the SL4's wife said to him, "I'm proud of you for calling the foul on yourself. I saw you touch the ball. I knew you would do the right thing."

The moral of the story is: Always do the right thing, and you'll never have to worry about who might be watching!!

Blessings to you all, Rodney "Triple P" Fontaine

May 6, 2013

Rodney 'Triple P' Fontaine, the Pool Playing Preacher



Winning the world for Jesus, on a pool table

January 30, 2016

TO LOVE IS THE GREATEST!

It was a Monday evening, December 11, 2011, to be exact, and I remember it as if it were yesterday. I was driving home from a business dinner meeting in Chicago. “Dr. Cue”[®] was scheduled to make an appearance at a local pool hall that night. I was tired from a long day at work, then an hour drive into Chicago for a two-hour dinner meeting with colleagues and an hour drive back. I wanted to go home after this twelve-hour day, unwind and call it a night. I knew I had likely missed the exhibition, but I also knew that Tom Rossman would be taking on anyone who wanted to challenge him. Say no more. I exited the expressway and headed to the pool hall.

I walked in and saw “The Doctor of Billiardology” giving a lesson to one of our league representatives. I walked up to Tom’s wife, Marty, and asked who was next in line for a challenge match. Apparently, people were shy that night. I was nowhere near shy – I was charged up to take on this ESPN and World Masters Trick Shot Champion in a game of eight ball. Dr. Rossman finished his lesson, and asked who was next. I stepped up... without a cue stick.

Dr. Rossman graciously gave me my choice of his arsenal of cues. I picked his famous “number two pencil,” determined to give it my best shot.

That’s a lie. I was determined to beat him. Decisively. With his own “number two pencil” cue stick.

He let me break. After all, he was the professional, and I was the amateur league player.

We played, and got down to the eight ball. It was his shot. He could have easily made the eight in the corner pocket, but he attempted a four – rail shot. After all, he was an ESPN and World Masters Champion, and I was the amateur league player. He rattled the eight and left it in the jaws of the corner pocket.

Now, what kind of a player would I have been if I simply shot directly at that “hanging” eight ball?

“Well,” I began, “one good turn deserves another,” and I kicked the cue ball three rails back down to the corner pocket, making the eight ball.

Me and my big ego. I just had to show the man up.

Except a funny thing happened on the way to my “victory.” No one cheered louder, smiled broader, laughed longer, or exhibited more sheer joy at my “victory” than Tom himself.

The man was sincere, and his joy was palpable. He felt it, and so did I.

There is a certain rush of adrenaline one feels when one executes a challenging shot. (For me, that three rail kick was a “challenging shot.”) Tom’s reaction enhanced my experience. He took joy in my “victory.” (Forget the fact that he could have easily “beaten” me by simply pocketing the eight on the shot before, but instead sent the eight ball running a good sixteen feet, four rails back down to the corner pocket, hanging it in the process.)

I'll say it again: *the man literally took joy in my "victory."*

This should have been a lesson learned. Not quite. But we'll get to that in a minute.

We stepped away from the table, and I began to look at the merchandise he was selling, including his first instructional manual: "Fundamentals and Secret Systems for Beginners & Advanced Players." I purchased the book, the instructional DVDs; ... I even purchased an autographed cue ball with his trademarked cartoon image prominently displayed in full color.

I laid a "C-Note" on Tom's wife, Marty, together with my business card.

That's when she recognized me: "You're the lawyer we met around here a couple of years ago. I remember you gave us your card back then, and I'd even guarantee it's still in the van."

I guess I made some type of an impression the first time I met them.

In any event, Tom threw in an autographed 8 x 10 black and white glossy (for playing a challenge match) and a beautifully designed pool t-shirt (for "winning" my challenge match).

Having seen Tom Rossman compete with Mike Massey over the years on ESPN, I had to ask him what kind of guy Mike Massey was. Massey always seemed to be "larger than life" on ESPN, with a tremendous personality, "to boot"¹.

"Mike's a great guy. You know we are both Brothers in Christ.² As a matter of fact, we are planning a tour of the Philippines in a few months, where we hope to give exhibition matches and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a type of Christian 'pool ministry.'"

I frankly do not know whether the Holy Spirit moved me to tithe into this nascent ministry, or if it was simply "my ego" showing off, again. Whatever the motivation, be it spirit or flesh, *something caused me to reach back into my wallet....*

"Well then, let me tithe into your ministry. I think it's a great idea."

Tom was more than gracious, and in his exuberance told me he would love to visit my home and play some pool sometime. "I know you have a pool table at your house. You must."

We were definitely "bonding," this WPA World Artistic Pool Champion, ESPN and World Masters Trick Shot Champion, and me.

"Don't make that offer unless you are willing to follow through," I said.

"How does Wednesday work for you, Steve?" It was Marty, backing up her husband.

"Wednesday works just fine for me...."

Remember when I said earlier that "the man literally took joy in my 'victory'" and that "should have been a lesson learned"?

¹ This will not be lost on "Artistic Pool / Billiards" fans. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4gT1yhKs5A>.

² I did not. While I was aware of Massey's having given his life to Christ, I did not know that Rossman had, as well.

Well... Wednesday comes: I take off work early and cook a rib roast with mashed potatoes and grilled brussel sprouts. Made a decent salad, too, if memory serves. I expected Tom and Marty to arrive at 5:00 p.m. and stay for an hour or two. They called and asked if they could come early. "No problem." I figured they needed to leave early.

Tom had some great news. "I have to tell you, Steve, that seed you sowed into our ministry on Monday night bore fruit the very next day. McDermott called us yesterday, and offered to help sponsor our upcoming tour of the Philippines. Isn't God amazing"?

Where some see "mere coincidence," others see the hand of God at work in their lives. Dr. Rossman refers to God as being the "Master of Irony"!

Beth, the woman God brought into my life, arrived home from work, and the four of us enjoyed a wonderful meal and good conversation. After dinner, it was time to enjoy a few pleasant games of pool.

Tom watched Beth as she played, and offered suggestions that were directed to correct her mechanics and fundamentals. He took his time, gave her specific "drills" to incorporate into her practice routine, and was the perfect guest.

Then, Tom turned to me and said we needed to play. Eight ball or nine ball, it didn't matter. Best two out of three.

My ego reared its ugly head, like it did on Monday night. That ultra-competitive voice in my head told me: "I beat him Monday night, and now I'll beat him again."

Well, we played eight ball. We each "won" a game. But every time I missed a shot, I would get apoplectic. Anger doesn't begin to describe it. I wanted to play *the perfect game* against a world champion. *On my table, in my home!* It was ugly. If I missed – when I missed – I cursed myself, I hit the butt of my cue on the floor.

We were going into the third game. Tom tried to lighten the mood.

"Since we're playing for ***the intergalactic championship of the world***, in order to win, we'll have to bank the eight."

"Fine."

To tell the truth, I do not even remember who "won" that third game. I do remember sweating profusely. It was ugly.

I also remember Tom's reaction when it was over.

"You know, Steve, if you don't mind me saying so, you should really watch my video number 40 on 'enjoying the roll,'³ because you don't seem to be enjoying this very much."

³ You can view it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTX8jB6XBuA>.

I had seen this particular video before. His message came through loud and clear: “relax and enjoy the beauty of this game and the pleasure of our company.” I realized what a terrible mistake I had made, and became a horrible host to this man and his wife, who took valuable time out of their travel schedule to come by and enjoy a nice, quiet evening.⁴

He went on. “You know, I have played in plenty of professional tournaments in my life. People are funny. Some will enjoy every moment of the tournament weekend, happy to be there, and thankful for the competition. These players may ‘win,’ and they may ‘lose.’ *But win or lose, they enjoy the experience.* On the other hand, I have seen professional players who won’t say two words to anyone the whole tournament weekend. They are so intense; they make themselves miserable for the entire tournament. They, too, may win and they may lose. *But whether they win or lose, they are miserable.*”

“So tell me the truth, Steve, would you rather stay in the moment, enjoy the competition, strive to play your best and let the chips fall where they may, or would you rather be the player who is so self-absorbed and so focused on ‘winning’ that he speaks to no one the entire weekend? Even if you should ‘win’ the tournament – and, by the way, there is no guarantee that this behavior would lead you to ‘win’ – would it be worth it?”

We all want to win. It is likely the reason you procured a copy of this manual.

Our author has transitioned from competing on the international stage to giving exhibitions, and accepting challenge matches around the country. On occasion, his exhibitions may bring out an occasional “heckler”; and any challenge match has the potential to devolve into an “ultra-competitive” situation, at least in the mind of the challenger! Believe me. I know.

I have seen him navigate these potentially turbulent waters with alacrity.

To my mind, this is no small feat, and Dr. Rossman not only has been able to pull it off; *he actually seems to thrive on it!* Many times, he achieves this through “humor,” but it is more than mere “humor,” it is humor based in love.

Jesus Christ taught us ***to “love our enemies.”*** For many Christians, this is the most difficult of teachings. But, as Christians, we must remember that this “teaching” came from God Himself. As such, this is more than a mere “teaching”; indeed, it ***is a commandment.***

As I have seen, time and again, Tom Rossman lives Christ’s commandment by *loving those who occasionally heckle and challenge him.* It is a powerful thing to witness.

It should go without saying: If one is to truly “win” – whether it be at a parlor game or in life -- one must conduct one’s self with dignity and integrity at all times, no matter the ultimate “outcome.” But may I suggest something more important than this -- and “you will know them by their fruits” [Matthew 7:16 - NKJV] – from everything I have seen, Tom and Marty Rossman truly do love and respect their fellow man. They encapsulate their faith in the five simple words they live by:

“To Love Is The Greatest”

Written by: Stephen Saporta

⁴ For the record, I am happy to report the Rossmans’ visit to our home went well past midnight, and despite my momentary “inhospitable” behavior, we all had a wonderful evening.

December 28, 2009

GREAT NEWS DISCOVERY AND “DR. CUEISM” HUMOR!!

After checking all my sources, I have some great news for you – the balls will continue to roll in 2010 with beauty, vision, and promise – displaying their “artistic” colors and sounding their joyful “click”! Ah, yes “a thing of beauty is a joy forever.” This popular line is from the epic poem, Endymion, written by John Keats in 1818.

I always struggled with poetry other than the famous Roses are Red, Violets are Blue mantra we are all familiar with; however, I thought I would take a shot at Keats since it seemed to relate in such a special way to our sport! Keats goes on...

**“And now at once, adventuresome, I send
My herald thought into a wilderness:
There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress
My uncertain path with green that I may speed
Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.”**

Yes, the “adventure” of our billiard journey – unique shots / challenges, game options unlimited in nature, nail – biting matches, special events, practice rituals, discipline to understand winning even when the final score shows otherwise, left and right brain training, “makes in disguise,” artistic pool, new friends and “not so new” friends, and so much more – a “wilderness” of sorts! But then, the magnetic appeal of it all umbrellas our travel over the “green” cloth (other colors included)! The pure satisfaction of the experience moves smoothly “onward” through times of joy and times of less joy – the offense and the defense – the easy shots and the not so easy ones, realizing eventually that every shot should be your favorite shot!!

That’s enough literary culture for now! Let’s move on to the cultural side of my life – humor! Recently a person at one of my shows asked me if they could buy my lines – the “funny little” things I was saying during the performance. I knew they were funny since this person was the only one laughing. I was humbled and honored to give my lines away at no extra charge with the hope that this person would make one other person laugh somewhere...someday...somehow!!

Since then, I have developed a rather lengthy list of “Dr. Cueisms,” which are used to accent points of instruction and / or entertainment shows. Word of caution – some of the “Cueism Humor” has residual effect to it!!!! If you don’t laugh when you first read it, be prepared to wake up early in the morning busting out in laughter...exactly two weeks from the day you were first exposed to it. If you still don’t get it, please ask the person next to you!! There, I just gave you the first two Cueisms – reflecting the entertainment value of my present message.

Pages 61 and 62 present a partial list of “Dr. Cueisms” to “whet your appetite.” For a complete list please email “Dr. Cue”[®] for direct / online access: drcue@artisticpool.org

Laugh and enjoy, always...on your personal billiard and life journey to “victory”!

“Dr. Cueisms” – Victory Quotes / Quips / Tips / Short Stories!!

- 1) Laughter is the essence of humor.
- 2) Use two cues and call me in the morning.
- 3) Hit a ball hard and hope a pocket gets in the way.
- 4) Some tables are right-handed, some tables are left-handed, and some are amphibious.
- 5) The type of cue tip I use on my cue is a “cue tip,” and it’s my **favorite** one!
- 6) You should hit the object ball “perfectly perfect” and the cue ball “perfectly imperfect.”
- 7) If you think I’m talking too fast, please listen quicker.
- 8) The problem with racks is that they have holes in them – do you have one without a hole?
- 9) Always take solids, since every ball is solid.
- 10) Stripe ball is bigger, since it is a cue ball with a stripe on it – approximately a coat of paint thicker.
- 11) Stripe ball is smaller, since it used to be a solid with part of the paint rubbed off.
- 12) I always prefer the low balls, since they are in the pocket and not on the surface of the table.
- 13) A scratch means you get to rest. If you are tired, just scratch more to refresh yourself!
- 14) I like to keep the cue ball in my hand and not anywhere on the table with “ball in hand.”
- 15) Round cue tip hits round cue ball into round object ball into back of round pocket over round edge of slate on round earth spinning at almost 1,000 miles per hour – sounds easy, doesn’t it?
- 16) If you have any questions, please ask the person next to you – I never met a pool player that didn’t have an answer or opinion on what happens on or off the table!
- 17) I know people’s name, age, and more because I have ESPN.
- 18) Doing trick shots on TV is trick photography, since tricks are done and a camera is used.
- 19) I remember a cue stick one time valued at over \$100,000 – it had diamond chips, ruby chips, emerald chips, computer chips, and potato chips stuffed in a Pringles can.
- 20) This is my **favorite** shot – you can’t leave me this one!
- 21) There are five basic types of english for cue stick application: 1) bottom stick english; 2) backwards stick english; 3) bank stick english; 4) push stick english; and 5) side stick english.
- 22) Learn to use your whole cue and nothing but the cue, especially if you’re going to be a lawyer.
- 23) I love making the “impossible possible and possible impossible.” (Content inside quotation marks created and used during a show introduction of me long ago by Merle Humphreys, APA L.O.)
- 24) Chalking the butt end of the cue stick is for refills, just in case you run out of chalk!
- 25) If you see three 8 balls or three 9 balls for the winning shot, aim for the middle one.
- 26) Since a positive times a positive equals a positive, it is very logical to maintain an even number of positives in your game – in other words, do all things right w/o errors - results should be positive!
- 27) Since a positive times a negative equals a negative, it is even more logical to never have an “odd” number of errors in your game – 1 negative, 3 negatives, 121 negatives – results will end up “negative” mathematically, since each positive opposes each negative to produce poor results!
- 28) Some of my jokes have residual effect; consequently, you may wake up 2 weeks from now bustin’ out laughing – that is from the jokes you hear today!
- 29) **Every** shot in pool **should be** a straight shot!
- 30) **Every** crooked shot in pool **is** a crooked shot!
- 31) History is being created: as a ball rolls; as a player moves; as a player thinks – there it goes again!
- 32) His Story – the “good news” and “always the same” glory story!
- 33) A game played by “sound” is almost guaranteed to be a “sound” game!
- 34) Tilt your hat ten degrees to the left, move that chair two inches to the left, etc. – this allows the “air currents” in the room to work better, so the shot has a better chance of going in!
- 35) I often miss on purpose, so you can see how hard it is!
- 36) I will make six balls in a second or less – it is very fast! Without shooting, I ask everyone if they would like to see it again? Always funny!
- 37) Movie “outtakes” are fun to watch but are often missed, since they are normally shown at the end of the movie! I like doing the “outtakes” (misses) during the show, so you won’t “miss” them.
- 38) I can make this shot anytime I want – I just don’t want to make it yet!
- 39) The hardest shot in pool is the easiest shot, because the left brain must focus at a maximum!
- 40) The easiest shot in pool is the hardest shot, because the left brain often takes the shot for granted!

- 41) The cue ball should be addressed as follows: "Hello, Mr. or Mrs. Cue Ball"!
- 42) I want to visit Antarctica to do "wing shots" with the Penguins! They are dressed for the occasion!
- 43) Shot looks like an illusion – that's because I am actually in California doing a show right now.
- 44) Flip of coin is skill to the point of release from the hand, then it is in His hands – point to heaven!
- 45) I'll play any game you like – 9 ball, 8 ball, bank pool, chess, checkers, badminton, basketball (I can slam dunk from five feet), ping pong, tidily winks, marbles – go ahead, pick one!
- 46) A ball goes off the table and lands on the floor because of friction, heat, and gravity!
- 47) I am a trained professional – right now, that doesn't mean a thing!
- 48) See that chalk on the other side of the table – it has nothing to do with this shot!
- 49) When I get done with a show and / or a clinic, you will be either 100% better or 100% worse – there's no in between with me!! "Enjoy the roll"!
- 50) There are an infinite number of sides to an object ball or a cue ball, unless it is scaled in some way!
- 51) If you are trying too hard, you probably are! You will end up steering the cue stick and / or getting into the dreaded "paralysis of analysis" mode!
- 52) I am a "pro racker" (rackologist), having racked pool balls for over 50 years now!
- 53) As an object ball rolls four cushions on a bank during show, I pick it up and say – pretty much in!
- 54) Play for world, intercontinental, interplanetary, global championships – on Saturn, you "win" rings!
- 55) My favorite cue is a "Ms. Cue." My name is "Dr. Cue"® and my wife's name is "Ms. Cue" – I am the "doctor" and she is the nurse. We have specific job descriptions as follows -- My wife drives 95% of the time and "books" the shows, so her combined function is "wheel and deal"; I do the shows and the "books" of the company, so my combined function is "show and tell."
- 56) I get two tries on ESPN, three tries in a World Championship, and twelve tries at the venue I am at!
- 57) I haven't missed a shot in 30 years – if the object ball hits a cushion, when I am trying to literally make it, I simply sit down and internally say "safety" – my right brain calms the left brain, which can get upset or have a pity party for the literal miss. The right brain hears the word "safety" and puts a mental bandage on the pain of the miss, since the right brain has been programmed to know what a "safety" is. If the ball doesn't hit a cushion, it is still not a miss to me, since the ball stops somewhere on the planet – there's a new shot I've never seen before – that is the hardest thing to do (stop the ball right there – table or on the floor); thereby creating a new shot – I become an artist with a cue stick, creating new shots, all the time – Awesome mental technique / crowd pleaser!
- 58) I spent five years as a freshman in college; seven years as a sophomore; did a proficiency for clear sailing through my junior year; earned a B.D. (Degree Of Billiardology), which is a study of spheres, projectiles, and planes, an M.S. (More Spheres), and finally, a PH.D. (Pool Hall Degree). I am still trying to get out of college – just kidding! "Ms. Cue" continues to get me in to them for shows, etc.
- 59) I use special english for a "hand quicker than eye shot": high left, low right, center slide, skid pop, float swim; then, I do some special hand / arm animation motions for each!
- 60) If I don't make the shot this time, I will do it one more time, then a final time before the last time, and one very last time before the ultra final time, with one more time after that! Shot is impossible!
- 61) I lost half of my audience one time – 2 people! Then, 1 person! Then, 2 eyeballs – Big Group!
- 62) Masse shots can be dangerous; therefore, don't pull the cue out of table if it goes through it – leave it in the table, then another, etc. When six or more are stuck in the table, you can play bumper cue!
- 63) When a person gives me his or her name, I say – CORRECT! This always gets a laugh!
- 64) Ask a volunteer if they are sure they want to help with a shot. After a "yes" answer, hand a cue to the person, and ask for it back right away, without shooting – thank them for helping with the shot!
- 65) Even when a person loses on paper, he or she can "win" in his or her heart!
- 66) Misses can be perceived as "makes in disguise"!
- 67) Long shots can be perceived as "short shots in disguise"!
- 68) Pool balls roll because they are round, and pool balls drop because of gravity!
- 69) A funny excuse for not playing well is: "The ceiling is two inches – too high."
- 70) Take notes – we will have a quiz later!

RACK UP A VICTORY IN YOUR "LIFE" AND GAME!!

Personal “Life And Game” Victory Journey Story

My early learning experiences for various pool games started at age 10 when I worked at Elsie’s Pool Room in Minonk, IL. The predominant book for learning how to play pool back in those days was entitled **Winning Pocket Billiards** by Willie Mosconi, and I read it whenever I could. From 1967 – 1972 I went to college and participated in different game / sport activities centered predominately around bowling and various forms of billiard disciplines. After bowling a 300 game in 1970 my main attraction was 3-Cushion Billiards with its mathematical applications for connecting one diamond to another in order for the cue ball to travel down a calculated line to make a respective shot. **Billiards As It Should Be Played** by Willie Hoppe was the primary book most players of the carom art studied, and I was one of them. In addition, I became fascinated with a great little video entitled **Donald Duck In Math Magic Land**, which contained a humorous and animated presentation of the “diamond system” I was learning on the carom table. From a teaching standpoint, I absorbed “tidbits of information” from these resource tools and provided them to anyone wanting to learn like I was. Often I felt like a teacher, even though I was, what I found out later, in my infancy of learning.

After college, I became an AJBC (American Junior Bowling Congress) certified instructor and realized a foundation for fruitful communication skills to convey proper mechanics to Special Olympic groups, so they could roll a ball down a wooden lane and have fun doing it. During this same timeframe, I started to reach out to a host of 3-Cushion / pool players, as they searched for “game tips” that would hopefully take them to a higher level of performance. In almost every scenario, I witnessed a common thread of “victory”: the “personal joy” of a “student” who accomplished something they had not done before, and my own “personal joy” as the “teacher” when such “success” was brought to my attention.

In February of 1977, I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. My teaching journey became more focused on private pool lessons and an occasional group workshop. With each instructional opportunity, I learned how to react in a more compassionate manner toward student concerns about poor “paper” results and those “pesky” little shots that they were seeking help on.

Note: A series of “coincidental” things started to get my attention in 1982. It was very obvious that God was working in a big way as the “Master Of Irony.” In 1984, I experienced the RACK (Recreational Ambassadors For Christ’s Kingdom) Vision (See page 50!) A more complete vision explanation is available at: <http://www.drcuepromotions.com/outreach-vision-witness/>. This helped me understand what pool would be like in the future if we could see the “stewardship” and “ambassadorship” standards for our game / sport as God sees them; namely, an art of “spiritual pocket billiards,” for which we accept God’s love so we may love others and we accept God’s blessings so we may bless others. My approach to billiards (pool) was being transformed in a very special way.

Then, in 1986, Marty and I got married. I developed a simplified instructional pool program at Clark Technical College in Springfield, Ohio. The focus was on the essential “fundamentals” of pool and “secret systems” in an easy to understand presentation for banking and kicking. I learned so much from those that took the “packed” classes. Marty also held a position on the campus working as a recreation assistant. We gave support to each other’s efforts to work with students ready to “take on the world.” I taught – I learned! And, then I learned more! Marty and I learned together as we shared respective routines / experiences with each other, but more importantly, we started to gain an insight to how God equips people for a “higher purpose in life.”

In 1987, Marty and I left the college environment before us and entered a new domain of higher learning institutions around the United States, doing shows, giving clinics, and special activity engagements. I became “Dr. Cue”[®] and my wife became “Ms. Cue.” We committed our life journey and business to God knowing that He owned it all – our personal “gifts and talents,” logistical tour resources, equipment items, finances, and anything we: 1) had in the past, 2) held in the present, or 3) would have in the future. The Rack Up A Victory book became a printed reality in 1988, so God started to equip us with a small, yet valuable supplemental income source from sales of this product. To the present day, other products (game / life improvement aids) we developed helped provide financial support to our tour travels and heartfelt efforts to teach others how to “enjoy the roll” both “on and off” the table. One product, called Banks, Tricks, and “Kicks,” (1991) started a modern day billiard industry movement called “Artistic Pool.”

God had revealed a magnetic cue sport activity with three “life and game sides” for learning, teaching, and growing. The “sport side” of Artistic Pool (with eight foundational disciplines) became a solid competitive base for players around the world and continues to the present day. The “show side” of Artistic Pool has showcased entertainment presentations using “trick shots and so much more” that have given many players career / contract opportunities never dreamed possible before 1993. In 2000, a third part emerged; namely, the “outreach side” of Artistic Pool, using “gifted techniques” to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ message via creative shots, testimonies, and faith driven witness stories. Gospel Trick Shot Ministries and the RACK Team bonded in a common focus and mission to reach the lost in the billiard industry and beyond with special “outreach” efforts around the world. The RACK Vision Points from 1984 were ready to emerge after a sixteen-year hiatus (in God’s perfect timing)!!

In 2010, the higher purpose for the entire equipping God had done for Marty and me was more evident as God opened the first major “outreach” door outside of the United States under the GTSM / RACK Vision umbrella – Egypt!! Marty was fully supportive and equipped to handle the logistical items so necessary to make the trip. What a learning and teaching experience – just a few months before the Mubarak uprising! Sharing the Gospel message on a pool table in a Christian compound a few hours north of Cairo! The “Wadi Experience,” as it was called, touched my heart in a whole new way as I could see God using Artistic Pool to help heal hearts that were hurting, to provide prayers of hope to those with little, and to provide a special “victory” foundation to many who had never heard the “message of the Cross.”

Marty and I continued to do our multi-faceted, tent-making, duties using the “sport gift” of Artistic Pool. After Egypt, one door after another opened for “outreach” ministry work: Honduras, the Philippines (twice), and China, to name a few. For nearly five decades, I had been involved in the billiard / pool world with two primary knowledge-focused functions: learning (as a student of the game) and instructing (as a teacher of the game) while trying to maintain a healthy / consistent harmony between the two. Now, the kicker: on my first “outreach” trip to the Philippines, I was asked to teach a visiting soccer team at the Word of Life Camp in Laguna. I knew little about Soccer, but God was directing my steps to learn how to teach at an entirely new level and to equip me with specific points of “victory” for any sport and for any recreational player.

When I entered the room, there were four coaches and twenty-three (23) semi-professional women soccer players from various countries who practiced and competed on various soccer fields during their travels. The field at Word of Life Camp was, and is, one of the best anywhere, and it was free to use; however, we had a “No Bible – No Soccer” camp rule that all team members using the field must first sit in on a one-hour spiritual message. Most of those coming did not want to be there, but the desire to use the field they loved was an overriding force to sit through the presentation.

I prayed that God would provide a message that would touch the hearts of those present, since I thought I had no credentials for their specific sport, thereby lessening the odds of anyone really listening to me. I started by saying I knew little about soccer, and quickly assumed the role of a student myself, as I asked them to give me a basic update on their sport. On a blackboard, I listed some critical “participation principles” for success: 1) mechanics / fundamentals; 2) angular motion / mathematical; 3) emotional / psychological; and 4) mental / strategies. I complimented the coaches for doing these well, which seemed to calm their hearts, as I continued to share.

I then wrote on the board – To Win Is Great; To Play Is Greater; To (Blank) Is The Greatest! I explained the first two points – understood by all! I asked the players to fill in the blank for the third point. The room became amazingly quiet and still, even by those who were previously fidgeting in their chairs or whispering for some reason. A girl in the back row leaned forward and gave a response in a hushed tone. I put her answer in the blank – To **LOVE** Is The Greatest!

I told the story of God’s love and read from 1 Corinthians 13 – often referred to as the “love” chapter in the Bible. I told them about a desire I had over thirty years ago to be complete in every way (personally and in my professional billiard career), so I made a “spiritual connection” with God via His “love” for us demonstrated by His Son, Jesus and what He did at the Cross. A faith acceptance of this love was God’s gift to us, which allowed the Holy Spirit to live in us to guide our “game and life” journey. I noted the word “spiritual” as a fifth primary factor for sport success. I handed out a “salvation bracelet” to everyone present as a “gift” and explained the gospel story with clarity. I prayed for the group and left, not really knowing if they “got the message”!

The next morning, I went to breakfast and the girl who gave the “love” response at the meeting came up to me with “tears of appreciation” in her eyes. She told me there had been a major division within the player group for some time until that morning. After the “love” message the night before, God had surely worked on the hearts of the players and coaches, as ALL of them were now eating, laughing, talking, and enjoying the morning at the “same” table (instead of two or three separate ones normally), sharing a renewed bond of “love” for each other and the recreational passion for Soccer. It was amazing to see how God provided a message they needed to hear, and “they got it perfectly”: bonded hearts with God’s “love” for ALL!!

“Life” is the great classroom for learning, and God’s amazing grace “love” is the ultimate lesson [gift] demonstrated through His Son, Jesus Christ at the Cross – available for ALL!

“Dr. Cue”® Articles For Reference: “Heart Associated Themes” – Pages 17 through 24!

JOURNEY PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS IN YOUR “LIFE” AND GAME

- **Realize:** We are sinners and that self effort / self righteousness can’t fix it
- **Embrace:** The “message of the Cross” – Jesus Christ and Him Crucified
- **Believe:** By faith what happened at the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus
- **Focus:** On the Cross as the “only” means of Salvation through Jesus Christ
- **Ask:** And receive forgiveness for your sins by the atonement work of Jesus Christ
- **Accept:** Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior by means of the Cross
- **Thank:** God for His “love” and the “gift” of His Son, Jesus Christ via the Cross
- **Continue:** Focus on the Cross to live a victorious life as the Holy Spirit leads
- **Know:** That we are the “righteousness” of God through Jesus Christ
- **Trust:** In the foundational standing we have as heirs and children of God
- **Maintain:** Daily thanks, prayer, Bible reading, and fellowship with other believers
- **Climb:** Each “mountain” with the Holy Spirit guiding you step by step
- **Acknowledge:** That everything we have belongs to God, including ourselves
- **Help:** Others by being a cheerful giver – to those in need (mind, body, soul)
- **Pray:** That His will be done in all you do, and NOT your will, as self may want

“Dr. Cue”[®] Victory Bio / Photo / Trademarked Logo



Sponsor: “Dr. Cue”[®] Promotions

RETIRED FROM OFFICIAL ARTISTIC POOL COMPETITION AFTER THE 2011 WPA WORLD TITLE TO FOCUS ON FAMILY, SHOWS, TEACHING, SPECIAL PROMOTIONS, WRITING, & MINISTRY OUTREACH EFFORTS!

Verses from The Old Rugged Cross (by George Bernard in 1913 – Public Domain):

So, I'll cherish the old rugged cross; till my “trophies” at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross; and exchange it one day for a “crown.”

Special Accomplishments:

- 1980 to March, 2011 – 30 Artistic Pool Discipline Titles, with wins in all 8 disciplines – “Clean Sweep”
- 1980 to March, 2011 – 12 World, ESPN, and / or Continental Artistic Pool Champion Titles
- 2004 Wing-Shot Personal Event Record - 7 out of 7 at the WPA Las Vegas Open Championship
- 2005 Wing-Shot Personal Event Record Duplicated -- 7 out of 7 at the WPA World Championship
- 2007 Wing-Shot Personal Event Record Three-peat – 7 out of 7 at the US Open Championship
- 2007 Wing-Shot Personal High Run Record – 47 (9' Gold Crown) – Friend's practice studio on 9/12/09 in Oakland, MD and 62 (7' Valley) – Tropicana Hotel & Casino (ACS), Las Vegas, NV on 5/15/14

- Over 5000 “artistic pool” entertainment shows / “open forum” workshops / clinics since 1986
- Over a million tour miles – Over five million online instructional hits – Miles and miles of smiles
- Author of Rack Up A Victory training book, videos, and DVDs, plus mental game enhancers
- Creator of Banks, Tricks, & "Kicks" training products for “artistic pool playing artists” worldwide
- Considered “founding father” of modern day “artistic pool” movement and The Foundation of R.A.C.K.
- Concentrated focus on ministry “outreach” around the world using billiard / life platform
- Developer of special “outreach” newsletter called The Artistic Pocket (drcuepromotions.com)
- MC / Director / Training services for Artistic Pool events / functions with wife, Marty (“Ms. Cue”)

Detailed “Artistic Pool” Competition Victory History

Special Note: The following competitive achievements are blessings that God has allowed me to experience as equipping, testimony, and witness for my personal “life and game” journey. God provided it ALL – the gifts, the talents, the events, the titles, the trophies, the special moments in billiard history, and much, much more.

ALL belongs to Him and ALL glory goes to Him!! Thank you, God for EVERYTHING!!

- 2011 WPA World Bank/Kick Shots Champion
- 2010 ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots Runner-Up (Team USA)
- 2009 ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots Champion (Team USA)
- 2009 Masters Stroke Shots Champion
- 2009 Masters (Perfect Score) Jump Shots Champion
- 2008 WPA World Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2008 ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots Champion (Team USA)
- 2008 ESPN Trick Shot Magic Champion
- 2008 Extreme Pool Championship Runner-Up
- 2008 Masters Stroke Shots Champion
- 2007 ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots Runner-Up (Team USA)
- 2007 ESPN Trick Shot Magic Runner-Up
- 2007 US Open Artistic Pool Champion
- 2007 US Open Trick and Fancy Shots Co-Champion
- 2007 US Open Draw Shots and Jump Shots Champion
- 2007 Masters Trick and Fancy Shots Champion
- 2006 WPA World Artistic Pool Champion
- 2006 WPA World Draw Shots Champion
- 2006 Brunei Trick Shot Masters Champion
- 2006 ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots Champion (Team USA)
- 2006 ESPN Trick Shot Magic Runner-Up
- 2006 Masters Trick and Fancy Shots Champion
- 2006 Masters Masse Shots Champion
- 2005 WPA World and Masters Bank/Kick Shots Champion
- 2005 ESPN Trick Shot Magic Semi-Finalist
- 2004 WPA World Prop/Novelty/Special Arts Champion
- 2004 WPA Las Vegas Open Runner-Up
- 2004 WPA Las Vegas Open (3 Disciplines)
- 2004 WPA Masters Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2004 WPA Masters Follow Shots Champion
- 2004 BCA North American Champion (2 Disciplines)
- 2003 BCA North American Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2003 WPA World Champion (3 Disciplines)
- 2002 ESPN Trick Shot Magic Champion
- 2002 WPA World Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2002 WPA World Draw Shots Champion
- 2002 BCA North American Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2002 BCA North American Jump Shots Champion
- 2001 BCA North American Artistic Pool Champion
- 2001 BCA North American Champion (4 Disciplines)
- 2001 WPA World Prop/Novelty/Special Arts Champion
- 2000 WPA World Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 2000 BCA North American Artistic Pool Runner-Up
- 1998 World TASA Champion
- 1997 North American TASA Co-Champion
- 1982 World Masters Trick Shot Champion
- 1980 BCA National Trick Shot Runner-Up

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Victory Foundation / Reinforcement / Commentary

Proverbs 16:9 (NKJV) – “A man’s heart plans his way; but the Lord directs his steps.”

Personal Victory Story Of God’s Amazing Grace Follows:

In September of 2011, Marty and I were completing a Western tour when I noticed something wrong with my left eye, as it appeared to be going partially blind. I called my eye doctor in Evansville, IN, and, after a short test on the phone; he referred me to a retina specialist near him for a consultation. A few days later, I was in the specialist’s office for a battery of tests. My left eye had a detached retina, which was causing the blindness. An appointment was made for a retina reattachment procedure the next day. Now, the amazing part of this story – the specialist told me that “since I was in the office,” he might as well look at my right eye. This has always been my primary “good vision” eye to see things clearly, as my left eye had always been a “lazy eye.”

When the specialist checked my right eye, he discovered five torn sections in it that could lead to loss of vision at any time. He highly recommended immediate treatment for “this” eye, so between the appointments of his other clients he did some laser scarring of the torn sections to fix the problems. Four laser treatments went well – but on the fifth one, a nerve in the eye was hit, causing severe pain. He said he could still fix it by doing a “cyber-freeze” of the eyeball and then doing the laser again. It worked! My right eye was as good as new. He performed surgery on the left eye, and my sight was restored. God directed me to this “angel of vision” for my left eye, with the miraculous discovery of the right eye problems that were taken care of on the spot. ***Praise The Lord!!***

Verses from Amazing Grace (by John Newton in 1779 – Public Domain):

“I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.”

- God’s Amazing Grace allows us to see – how sweet the sight!
- God’s Amazing Grace allows us to hear – how sweet the sound!
- God’s Amazing Grace allows us to feel – how sweet the touch!
- God’s Amazing Grace allows us to taste – how sweet the flavor!
- God’s Amazing Grace allows us to smell – how sweet the scent!

Note: Grace is defined as unmerited favor from God – Jesus Christ died for one and all on the Cross – in atonement for all of our sins, and in order for us to live a victorious life, as we continue our walk with the Holy Spirit guiding our steps – with assurance of our eternal home (mansion) in heaven.

Reminder Points: Visualizations / Perceptions / Disguised Items:

- Misses are makes in disguise
- Failures are successes in disguise
- Problems are solutions in disguise
- Losses (on paper) are wins / victories in disguise

Reinforcement Notes: Colonel Sanders was able to develop his highly successful secret recipe chicken only after dozens of perceived failures. Many players in different sports experience perceived mistakes (missing shots, striking out, dropping the ball, etc). Those, who use these “elements of frustration” as “positive stepping stones” to their journey goals, are truly successful!

Life And Game Commentary: Keep in mind visualizations (total left brain sensory receptions) that appear negative or that are reasoned as less than favorable can become engrained perceptions in the right brain as the “things to do.” An application of spiritual senses (page 48) via the Holy Spirit within us can lead the way to “Rack Up A Victory In Your **Life** And Game.” Focusing on the “message of the Cross” (page 47) can reveal complete “victory” both on and off the table in the midst of those things that tend to hold us back or that seem to create turmoil in our overall **life** and game journey!

Victory Personal Notes / Affirmations / Prayers

Personal Notes: I started this manual with **game and life** and finished with **life and game**. Having an understanding of the foundation of “**life**” is paramount to all other things we seek!

John 14:6 (NKJV) – Jesus said: “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”

By faith, we believe what God’s love has done, is doing, and will do in our **“life journey”!**

Hebrews 11:1 (ICB) – “Faith means being sure of the things we hope for. And faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.”

Macmillan Dictionary definitions applicable to “faith”: 1) belief not based on proof; 2) trust, reliance, or confidence

Personal Affirmation: “My main focus is on what happened at the Cross for personal Salvation and Sanctification – which, first of all, allows the Holy Spirit latitude to direct the steps of my **life**, with the ‘game’ I love to play / ‘watch over’ being a special and ‘victorious’ by-product / blessing.”

Personal Prayer: Lord, I’m available! Do whatever you want with my **life** and game, and show me what to do – refresh me, restore me, renew me, use me! In 2002, I experienced a major physical trial in my life before the ESPN Trick Shot Magic event. This prayer provided me peace and comfort during a difficult time – to realize complete **victory** both “on and off” the table.

Enjoy – “The Angel, The Mountain, and The Victory” at: www.drcuepromotions.com
(Click on the “Schedule / **Travelogue**” menu tab. Then, the “story behind the story” – 2002 ESPN)



~ IN YOUR “LIFE” AND GAME ~

PSALMS 33:3 (NKJV) – “PLAY SKILLFULLY WITH A SHOUT OF JOY”

Imagine playing pool and living life in a new and exciting way, with “less” self-effort and “more” peace, no matter how difficult the road may be! The instructional content in this manual provides special food for thought and action, which guarantees that “everyone” can truly experience the joy of having the “heart of a champion” – win or lose!!

May God Bless You In Your “Victory” Journey! Tom “Dr. Cue”[®] Rossman

Hebrews 11:6 (KJV) – “But without Faith it is impossible to please Him: for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He [God] is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.”