

Practice Makes Perfect

The elevator descended slowly. The ride, as always began on the 20th floor. Russ noticed the unusual design of the elevator car. "How can it be this large" he thought. "A fine oriental carpet, leather recliner, soft lighting, Pachelbel Canon, piped softly into the car. "Great elevator, great ride" he thought.

He was subtly aware of the car's movement. The numbers, indicating the change in floors, were unusual. Rather than the traditional small numerals, a large number 20 appeared on the door. As he focused on the number it began to fade into a fog as a number 19 emerged. The numbers changed slowly. He felt increasingly relaxed. This was not an unusual experience for Russ. Some days, the car seemed to move quite quickly but today, the descent was at a slow comfortable pace until he reached the first floor.

He had looked forward the door opening. The view, he knew, would be beautiful. The fragrance of the flowers, along with the sound of the wind in the trees, was always pleasing. His trip down the gravel path seemed to vary in length each time he came to practice. Today, however, he seemed to feel more energized than usual. He had come to practice his game. There were, he was sure, few who had the facility he had designed. Golf was his game, this is where he came to improve it. This is the place he came to practice, play, work and..... relax.

There were times when he took his time to arrive at the house. He would often stop for a swim. He found his laps to be relaxing. The pool, a two lane lap pool, was set beautifully on the lawn in front of the house. A single chair stood by the pool side, two towels awaiting his arrival. The pool area itself was beautiful. Surrounded by tall sea grass that added to the privacy. He often stopped to notice the rhythmic swaying of these graceful reeds. It relaxed him. He often seems to lose track of time. Not sure of how long he spent in the pool but sensing that here, time really made no difference.

The house was magnificent. He had designed every detail himself. It was however, unusual in one respect. It had only one room. A large den. The great stone fireplace, thick, comfortable rug, and a soft relaxing reclining chair. Were anyone able to visit, they would notice the 4 large screen TV's that lined the wall in front of Russ's chair.

By far the most dramatic aspect of this space was the golf practice facility that Russ created beyond the glass wall and sliding glass doors.

An expansive slate patio met unusually high grass, for a lawn. Intentionally left long, he said, because he needed the challenge. Thirty feet blended into a shorter grass and a slope that ended at a beautifully manicured green. Russ described the green as quite large, excellent, he said for practicing his long putts.

The green was protected by four bunkers of varying depths. Looking back up the fairway, at about 110 yards, a fog seemed to descend that blocked his seeing any further. Just the right amount of space, he said, for his short game. Adjacent to this special place, only a short walk, was a tee box and an extremely narrow fairway, 50 feet wide at most, boarded on both sides by tall pines. "I need it to be narrow" he said "it keeps my drives straight." The fairway was easily 350 yards long.

Today he decided that he would spend his practice time in the sand. He selected a rather deep bunker, and dropped 30 balls in a place where he could barely see the flag. Setting up over the balls, and taking all the time necessary, he made 30 consecutive perfect shots. His swing had the perfect tempo. He could feel the club in his hands, hear the sound of the club face making contact with the sand and see the ball move gently toward the pin. Today, having a bit more time he decided to watch himself make these shots on his TV screens. He enjoyed the ability to adjust the speed of his swing with his remote. "It helped" he said "when he actually played. He sensed that time was getting short now.

As the LIRR pulled into Penn Station, he moved back to the elevator, counted from 5 to 1 and quickly returned to his seat.



Creative visualization is a valuable tool to enhance the “*Mind Game*”. We may have a built in resistance to making use of visualization if we consider it daydreaming. We all know what parents & teachers said about daydreaming.

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