

THIS ISSUE

Unlimited Power - a synopsis, review and commentary on the book and the methods advocated by Anthony Robbins, with examples for the shooter and the shooting coach added by the reviewer. **Part One** outlines the basic concepts for improving your personal power, by improving your ability to communicate internally (self talk) and externally (verbal and non-verbal communications).

Getting the Right Glasses... ideas from James R. Gregg, O.D. on how to prescribe glasses for shotgun, rifle and pistol shooters can help you educate your own optometrist.

NEXT ISSUE

Unlimited Power - a synopsis, review and commentary on the book and the methods advocated by Anthony Robbins. **Part Two** includes such topics as mind mastery, body language, energy and goal setting.

Genius is seldom recognized for what it is - a great capacity for hard work.

Far East Fortune Cookie Co.

THE GENERAL FIGURED HE HAD NOTHING TO LOSE...

When the brash young man who'd never held a pistol in his life boasted that he could cut training time IN HALF for the United States Army's pistol-shooting program, the General smiled.

When he vowed that he would raise its success rate at the same time, the General laughed.

But when the man insisted that he wouldn't take a penny in payment unless he was 100% successful, the General said, "You're on!"

Using the very same techniques that would make him a millionaire before his 29th birthday... that brash young man accomplished what the United States Army had never been able to do.

In just a day and a half - less than half the length of the Army's training program - he succeeded in qualifying 100% of the people in the pistol-shooting program. (The Army usually qualified only 70%.)

Not only did he beat the Army's average by 40%, he also tripled the number of people who attained the "expert" rating.

Army officials called it the first breakthrough in pistol shooting since World War I.

That brash young man was Anthony Robbins. Following is Part One of our synopsis, review and commentary on his book and his methods.

UNLIMITED POWER - PART ONE

Anthony Robbins' book, "Unlimited Power" starts with the following clarification: it's not about power over other people; it's about power over yourself. And, he says, if you do not have power over yourself, then other people will have power over you.

Robbins emphasizes that ideas and positive thinking are not sufficient conditions for producing a successful life (or we would all be living the "dream life"); he says that what is required for success is ACTION. He says that what distinguishes the most successful people is not some special "gift". Rather, it is their ability to act. Further, he says that:

- Your state of mind determines what you can (and can't) do; and
- All successful results can be modeled and therefore duplicated.

Robbins says that there are two key things that shape our experience of life, and indeed, shape our life itself. These two things are central themes to the entire book. He asserts that we carry on two very important dialogues, and these shape what we will be able to accomplish in life. These dialogues are:

- Our internal dialogue, which CoachNet readers will recognize as "self talk"; and
- Our external communications (verbal and non-verbal), or how we communicate with others.

He cites many people from history who achieved outstanding success, success that can be attributed to their ability to communicate with the people around them. He says that our ability to communicate with others will determine our level of success in the external world.

Similarly, our ability to communicate within ourselves will determine our internal success; that is, our self-talk determines our happiness. And, if you thought for a moment that your circumstances determined your happiness, think again... it is how you think (and therefore feel) about your circumstances that determines your happiness.

(Yes, this does have a great deal to do with shooting, and as Robbins develops his theme, you

will see that it applies well to our sport, each shot, every match and every shooting career.)

Robbins talks about finding a model for the success that we wish to achieve, and then using our self-control to reproduce both the internal and external communications that will duplicate it. While this is admittedly not a new idea, Robbins manages to persuade the reader that these notions are fundamental principles, and then he provides tools to enable the reader to turn the ideas into action, that is, to produce results.

Robbins view is that we create our emotional world, and that we develop habits that make it easy to repeat and reinforce our pattern. The most positive version of this I have ever read is a quote attributed to Einstein... "Excellence is not an act, but a habit."

Robbins has spent considerable effort in modeling successful people. He says that:

- Successful people know what they want (have a clear picture of the outcome they want);
- They take action;
- They assess the results of those actions; and then
- They change their actions until they produce the desired result.

It is easy to picture these steps as the framework for a successful training session. The shooter has a clear picture of the quality of holding pattern they want and the elegance of the subconscious shot release. The shooter changes his position and balance and focus and timing... and keeps trying until all of the elements of firing a perfect shot are produced simultaneously.

Robbins cites the example of Colonel Sanders who, with his Kentucky Fried Chicken recipe, knocked on 1009 doors and heard "no" 1009 times... how many of us would still be knocking on doors at this point? Colonel Sanders did knock that 1010th time, and finally heard, "Yes." It was the beginning of an empire.

In addition to this persistence, Robbins says that successful people also have several character traits in common.

- One is passion. Successful people are driven; they are often obsessive about their lives and their actions.
- Another is belief. Successful people believe they are capable and that they can achieve great things.
- The third trait of successful people is that they have a strategy. They have a plan, a way to use the resources around them to best effect.

- Another trait that makes people great is clarity of values. This is directly tied to have a clear idea of what is important to you.
- Successful people are high-energy people. They have the health and vitality that creates energy and they apply it well.
- Most successful people also have an extraordinary ability to bond with people, perhaps on a world stage (as did Gandhi and Martin Luther King) and certainly on the individual level.
- The final trait that Robbins discusses, and the one that is truly at the heart of his book, is that great successes are great communicators.

The basis of Robbins approach is that we control what we think. He cites the science of Neuro-Linguistic Programming as both the proof and explanation that this is so. NLP has mainly been used in therapy to help people change destructive thinking patterns. However, it is the same NLP that shooters use to model positive images and positive behaviors to fire a perfect shot, regardless of the conditions (internal emotions or external challenges). Most shooters would agree that they were not born with the image of the perfect sight picture, that they planted the image in their own brains and they consciously project it every

time they shoot. This is NLP applied.

What Robbins adds to the mix is this simple idea: if you want to become a successful person, you need to model yourself on successful people. And this modeling includes their patterns of behavior, their patterns of thought and their patterns of feeling. Robbins states it this way: there are three keys to modeling that produce excellence.

1. Beliefs. As we often say in our Mental Marksmanship Seminar, "Whether you believe you can or you can't, you're right."
2. Mental Syntax. This refers to how you organize your thoughts. Understanding your own mental syntax will help you access your own power, and get the outcome you desire. Understanding the mental syntax of others will help you communicate effectively (and productively) with them.
3. Physiology. The brain is a part of the body and the state of the body determines the state of mind. This is body language, and its effects on your internal state and on the people around you.

Chapter III - The Power of State

Robbins asks the reader if he's ever been in that magical state

where he could do no wrong... and then asks if the reader has ever been in that state where everything he touches turns to mud.

He says that the difference is the neuro-psychological state that you're in. And he says that you can control what state you are in. He says that successful people can put themselves into a state that supports them in their achievements. This is also known as an "Ideal Performance State".

So how do they do it? Robbins suggests that there are two components that they control: the first is their internal representation of the situation and the second is their physiology. So, a successful shooter sees the competition situation as an opportunity to be the best they can be (internal representation) and his body language projects confidence, ease and intensity (physiology).

The important thing to remember is that your internal representation (how you see things) is only a guideline to reality. It is your way of representing reality, much as a map represents a physical reality of roads and towns. The key point is that you choose your own representation, and if you are going to be a successful person, you need to choose one that supports your ability to achieve.

Successful people are consistently able to access an empowering inner state.

The importance of state is not just how you feel about the world and your current situation in it. The importance of state is that when you are in one, you access behaviors that you have modeled with that particular state. For example, some people believe that if they feel "butterflies" before a shooting match or any other event in their lives, that they are nervous, scared, and panicky... and so believing it, they become those things. I decided years ago, when piano recitals and public speaking were my challenges, that "butterflies" simply meant that my body was marshalling forces and that every part of me was prepared to focus and deliver. So, the "butterflies" state became as empowering one for me, because from it, I was now able to access behaviors that would help me achieve my aim.

Robbins says that if we can take control of our own communication within ourselves, we can produce outstanding results. He says that the most effective managers, coaches and parents are people who can represent and project successful models, even in the face of challenging (even hopeless) situations.

Chapter IV -
The Birth of Excellence: Belief

"One person with a belief is equal to a force of ninety-nine who have only interests"... John Stuart Mills.

Your beliefs can limit you or they can empower you.

Some of the most memorable people of all time are people who changed our beliefs, whether they were religious leaders or explorers or scientists.

The first step to excellence is the realization that we choose our beliefs. And you can choose beliefs that limit you or you can choose beliefs that empower you.

Our beliefs come from our environment. As Robbins says, the real horror of ghetto life is not the day-to-day reality of it but the paralyzing effect it has on beliefs and dreams. And from the other end of the spectrum, Robbins cites a study of extraordinarily successful young people that found they were not particularly brilliant or talented, but that they were given special attention during their development. They believed they were special because they were treated that way... and that belief helped them develop into great talents.

Events can form our beliefs. We have all heard of life-forming or life-changing events. This may be a small event, such as a

respected teacher's insightful remark, or a big event, such as "9-11".

Our beliefs can also be formed by knowledge, whether that knowledge comes from direct experience or indirectly from a book or other source.

We can also create (and certainly reinforce) our beliefs by our results. Accomplishment begets confidence. Many shooters use this tool... "If I can shoot one perfect shot, I know I can shoot another... and another... and another..."

And finally, we can create a belief just by imagining it is so. And that is the purpose of the mental imagery that shooters use. We picture ourselves shooting the perfect shot, and then shot after shot, until we have pictured a perfect match.

Chapter V -
The Seven Lies of Success

Robbins emphasizes that if your beliefs are not working for you, you need to change them. If your beliefs set you up for sadness, anger and failure... then change your beliefs!

He says that there are seven "lies" that successful people believe... not that they are really lies, but that no one really knows for sure whether they are true.

1. Successful people believe that everything that happens can serve our purpose. They see possibilities in every situation.
2. Successful people believe that there are no failures, only results. This one is particularly important for shooters... a shot that lands in the eight-ring is not a failure. It is an outcome; it is data; it will inform the shooter's decision-making for the next shot.
3. Successful people take responsibility for their world. Again, this one is very important for shooters. The shooter who says that the wind is trickiest on his lane and it's the wind's fault that his score is low, is not addressing the situation as a learning situation. The successful shooter says, "What wind indicator did I not see? Where should I be looking before the next shot to ensure I understand what the wind is doing?"
4. Successful people focus more on using things than on understanding things. It is not so important to be able to answer "why?" as it to be able to answer "so what?" We all know very clever people who can explain the why of things and cannot do anything with them. Shooters who do this

are very knowledgeable in the technical or the physiological or the mental aspects of shooting, but they cannot fire well. (Sometimes coaches can be very knowledgeable and not be able to coach well. The techniques in Robbins' book can help.)

5. Successful people believe in people. They usually admire and respect the abilities of others. Shooters who ask the match winner what he was using to read the wind, or what he was thinking when he shot so well, are exhibiting this belief. They assume that the match winner got on the podium by doing things well, and they are keen to understand and model his achievement.
6. Successful people love their work; in fact, they approach their work as if it were their play. Shooters who think that training is drudgery will likely not get the most they can out of their time on the range. Champion shooters enjoy shooting.
7. Successful people are committed. Successful people know what they want to accomplish and they keep trying until they achieve it. They are willing to "sacrifice" things that don't lead to their goals, and they don't see it as

sacrifice. The athlete who wants to achieve great success sees going to the range as an opportunity to find the path to success (not as an interruption to their social life, for example).

But if you don't "naturally" believe in these secrets to success, what can you do to become successful? The answer that Robbins provides is this: change your beliefs.

In the next issue of CoachNet, we continue our synopsis, review and commentary on Robbins' book, including such topics as "Mastering your mind - how to run your brain", "Body language - the avenue of excellence", "Energy - the fuel of excellence", as well as a goal-setting exercise that can easily be applied to shooting... and to life.

**"There is no greater sin than enslavement to desire,
no greater curse than discontent,
no greater misfortune than selfish craving.
Therefore, in being content,
one will always have enough."
Lao Tsu**

**The first step to making dreams come true is waking up.
Unknown/Anonymous**

GETTING THE RIGHT GLASSES

The following short item is a summary of key points offered in an article called "How to prescribe for hunters and marksmen" by James R. Gregg, O.D. (originally published in the journal of the American Optometric Association (Volume 51, Number 7)).

Hunters and marksmen have some unusual seeing problems and they differ depending upon the type of gun - shotgun, rifle or pistol.

All shooters should wear glasses for eye protection, even though the risk is small. Ordinary lenses provide adequate protection unless there is a cataclysmic failure of the gun itself.

Field gunners (such as hunters) need a wide field of view, and so prefer wide frame with narrow rims. They also like a snug fit, and sometime select goggles.

Most shooting activity requires the gunner to sight near the top of the lens, so the frame needs to have sufficient vertical area and be set high enough on the face to accommodate unobstructed aiming.

The butt stock of the rifle or shotgun may hit the bottom edge of the glasses if the frame is set low. A so-called "Decot frame" was designed for shooting; it sets high and is cut somewhat flat across

the bottom to clear the stock.

Glare protection is important for outdoors, and no less important for many indoor ranges with harsh lighting systems. The shooter needs a lens coating, and may wish to have a tinted lens. Gregg notes that while yellow tinted lenses are very popular with shooters, and many hunters insist they can see game more easily with them, there is no evidence to suggest that they improve the shooter's marksmanship performance.

Prescription Lenses - Shotgunners

Shotgunners need good vision, but their requirements are generally easy to meet. Their targets (clay birds) are large and moving, and the shooter more or less "centers" the gun rather than aiming with precision. Peripheral vision is an important aspect of locating the target.

There are two ways that shotgunners aim:

1. The shooter sights down the barrel to the bead and swings to the target and then past the target to establish the correct lead. In this method the eyes are fixed down the barrel line and the target must be located entirely with peripheral vision. Peripheral vision is also used to judge speed and direction at first,

until the gun is pointed at or near the target.

2. Another way to shoot a shotgun is to locate the target with central vision and then swing the gun to center in the visual field.

In the field, the hunter cannot look around with the gun pointed; only the second method is practical. The hunter is using his eyes to spot the game, and then lifts the gun into his field of view.

In either method, the shooter need not focus on the front sight of the shotgun, which is a small bead.

The demand on the shotgunner, then, is distance vision. Therefore the optometrist needs to provide the best possible visual acuity. (The presbyope¹ will also need to be able to inspect his gun and see his shells. Bifocals create no handicap in the aiming process, but if set too high might be a nuisance when walking in rough terrain.)

During aiming, the gunner looks through the upper corner of his lens (upper left for right-handed shooters). With a six-diopter lens, looking through a corner of

¹ Presbyopia is the condition of the eye occurring in middle and old age, where only distant objects may be seen clearly and corrective lenses are required to see near objects.

the lens can create a reduction in acuity and/or a directional prismatic effect. Strong prescription lenses should be centered where the shooter aims. To do this, mark the spot on a lens while the gunner is in the aiming position (even if this means bringing the gun to the optometrist's office).

Prescription Lenses - Rifle Shooting

The rifle is aimed by aligning two points on the gun barrel and positioning them properly in relation to the target. The shooter must have sharp vision at the target, which is always beyond 20 feet. This means that when the eyes accommodate for infinity, both front and back sights are somewhat blurred. This does not matter since they are blurred uniformly and the centering process can still be done accurately.² Even if the shooter wants to see the front sight clearly, it is 40 to 50 inches from the eyes and requires only a small amount of accommodation.

² I have not changed the wording of the original article here. Many shooters would disagree with Dr. Gregg. Many shooters think that they must see the front sight clearly in order to center it in the rear. Also, many shooters believe that they need to see the front sight clearly in order to focus their attention on the alignment of the sights, which is critical to accuracy.

A full distance correction is necessary for the rifle shooter. The presbyope and the aging shooter may be annoyed when he tries to clear the front sight, but it is not required for accuracy. The solution for aging may be telescopic sights, which do not require accommodation, and the magnification helps the aiming process.

A small amount of "extra plus" over the distance prescription might be used, but generally is not required.

Prescription Lenses - Pistol Shooting

Pistol shooters may require a creative solution for presbyopia because the pistol shooter must be able to see the front sight very clearly. While the aiming process is quite similar to that for rifle, the pistol shooter must be able to see the front sight with precision because:

1. The distance between the front and back sights is very short and so a very small misalignment can cause a huge error at the target; and
2. The pistol wobbles during the aim and the shooter needs to see the sights clearly to determine when they are aligned to each other and when they are aligned on the target.

The pistol shooter sees the distant target in a slight blur, and this blurring does not reduce his accuracy.

The pistol shooter, then, needs to be prescribed for the best possible focus on the front sight, which is usually about 34-40 inches from the eyes. Dr. Gregg says, "Measure it."

The presbyopic pistol shooter has the greatest difficulty when the front sight begins to fade.³ Focus can be improved by the use of a small aperture. Such devices are made specifically for pistol shooters. Adjustable apertures can be opened for walking around the range, and then when shooting, adjusted optimally for maximum focus and minimum light loss. The shooter who wishes to try the pinhole effect without buying another device can put a pinhole about 1-2 mm wide in a piece of black tape and center it on his line of sight.

Another way to prescribe for the presbyope is to supply +0.50 to +0.75 diopter over the distance prescription. This brings the

³ My personal experience (with -8 diopter distance lenses and +2 diopter reading lenses) is that the modern progressive lens works very well for pistol shooting... you just have to hold your head at the right angle. This works for the casual pistol shooter, but wouldn't be good enough for a serious competitor who would need exactly the right correction and then he would be able to use his head position for balance.

front sight into sharp focus. This can be provided as a small bifocal in the top of the lens where the shooter looks while aiming, or it can be provided with a clip-on. (An occluder for the non-aiming eye can also be provided directly in the frame or as a clip-on.)

Sighting Techniques

The shooter should use his dominant eye provided it has sufficient acuity. However, shooters with cross dominance (right-handed shooters with left-eye dominance, for example) may have to aim with their non-dominant eye.

Aiming can be done with both eyes in some cases. Most shotgunners keep both eyes open since they are "centering" rather than "aiming". Using both eyes helps locate the moving target. However, often one eye is closed to prevent double imaging and then opened during the last second to "zero in".

Rifle shooters in the field use much the same sighting process. Two eyes are needed to locate the game and one eye does the fine grain aiming. If the non-aiming eye cannot suppress, it must be closed. (Occluders are not practical for hunting.)

On the rifle and pistol range, occluders are often used. Dr. Gregg advises the optometrist to discuss the aiming process with

the shooter and if needed, assess the patient's ability to suppress.

Motor dominance is not always total. Often right-handed people do some things left-handed and a small percentage of people are completely ambidextrous. Hand dominance can be changed without ill effect, certainly if it is limited to a few tasks (such as holding a gun).

Eye dominance cannot be changed. A shooter with crossed dominance he has two choices:

1. Aim with the non-dominant eye; or
2. Learn to hold the gun on the side of the non-dominant hand.

For pistol shooters, using the dominant hand is usually important for acquiring a steady hold. Fortunately, it is possible to sight a pistol with the opposite eye by adjusting the shooter's position. The pistol shooter can also close or occlude one eye.

Beginners should be taught to aim with their dominant eye.

This problem is common. About one third of the population has a dominant right brain, which would normally make them left-handed, but because we live in a right-handed world, they acquire right-handedness. Most of them are left-eyed. A few natural left-handers are also right-eyed. The total number of crossed-

dominants is about 10-20% of the population. (A small percentage has no strong sighting preference, and a few others have only a partial preference.)

There are guns and sights built for crossed dominants (so that the shooter can hold the stock on one shoulder and sight with the opposite eye. One type is the "offset" stock, which needs to be fitted to the individual who is going to be using it. (With the offset stock, the recoil goes the opposite direction from the offset and some shooters do not like this.) Another solution is the "cross-over" stock, where the comb is cut so low that the shooter can move his cheek and face across the stock so the opposite eye can get in line with the sight.

Offset sights are another option.

Dr. Gregg advises that optometrists should discuss all options with the patient, but he emphasizes that the decision rests with the shooter. As he says, involving the shooter with the decision... "is the secret to pleasing patients who have special visual needs because of their recreation of hunting or target shooting. If you know how to handle those special needs, you'll find many hunters in your community will hunt you up."