

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 Two** includes such topics as mind mastery, body language, energy and goal setting.

NEXT ISSUE

Unlimited Power - Part Three includes such topics as the power of precision, the magic of rapport, excellence, problem solving, and anchoring yourself to success.

**"I hear I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand."**

Chinese Proverb

**"If you want to succeed, double
your failure rate."**

Thomas Watson

**UNLIMITED POWER - PART
TWO**

**Chapter VI -
Mastering Your Mind:
How to Run Your Brain**

In this chapter, Robbins provides exercises that help the reader invoke or enhance powerful, positive feelings (or state) by consciously manipulating the way he represents a situation to himself. He also provides exercises and examples of how the reader can minimize or erase the effect of negative experiences.

The technique is easy to understand and easy to reproduce. Simply put, you apply the way you normally represent a very positive experience to the experience you want to manipulate. So, for example, if a shooter has had a very positive practice or match, he would relive and replay that experience, noticing all the details of how his mind represents it... is it bright or dark? Are the images big or small? Is he seeing it from the first-person or the third-person (like a movie)? Are the voices or sounds soft or loud? And so on. Then the person would change the representation... make it brighter, make it bigger, change from first-person to third-person... and see which changes in the representation make the experience seem even more

positive. These details then can be applied to make another situation feel more positive. So, if the shooter has an important match coming up, his mental rehearsal would be formed with the details he knows results in a positive feeling.

Another example of how this technique can be used is how Robbins suggests we deal with negative memories. First, you imagine the negative situation and play with the modalities (the details of how it is represented) as you did with the positive situation above. Make it bigger and brighter and it will seem more intimidating; make it smaller and darker and it will seem less threatening. Make it very small and very hard to see, very dark, very fuzzy and indistinct. Push the image into a big bright sun and let it disappear in the brightness. This is an outstanding way to help a shooter forget a bad shot or a bad match.

Robbins gives another example that would help many shooters. This technique can be used when you have a very challenging task, one that is so overwhelming that you cannot even get started on it. Sometimes a big competition will feel like this to a shooter... especially his first big competition. The trick that Robbins suggests is simply to make an image of the situation in

your mind and then shrink the image until it no longer feels overwhelming.

Another example Robbins gives is that pesky "internal dialogue" that won't go away. CoachNet readers will recognize this as negative "self talk". Robbins says that if you have trouble getting rid of negative or self-defeating self-talk, just turn down the volume until you just can't hear it any more. If that doesn't work for you, change the tone of voice that you hear from that nagging or authoritative tone into a playful or sexy tone... does that change how you feel about it? Or make it sound like baby talk... does that set you free from its message?

Robbins says that when he is asked to counsel someone who is depressed, he doesn't ask why the person is depressed, but how the person is depressed. In other words, he is asking the person to describe how he represents depression to himself... what does he picture? How does he hold his muscles? What tone of voice is he using in his internal dialogue? From this information, Robbins can start to model the negative state and help the person recognize it, and then move on to taking control of it, and replacing it with positive representations.

Robbins emphasizes that, like any skill, this skill of controlling the

way we represent things, takes practice. But he has a trick to help you from sliding back to old habits of representing things negatively. He calls it the "swish pattern." He tells the reader to imagine the old negative behavior or un-resourceful state that we wish to replace; then imagine the behavior we want to replace it (like a movie, in the third person). Then he says you should close your eyes and picture the old behavior as a big bright image, with the new behavior as a small dark image inset in the bottom right corner. Then, in one quick single movement (taking no more than one second) have the desired behavior grow and completely overwhelm the old behavior, and simultaneously say in your mind "swoosh" in an enthusiastic way. Do this over and over until the old picture automatically triggers the new picture. So, for example, if a shooter has a fear of being overwhelmed by nervousness in finals, he would use that as his negative image. Then he would picture the replacement image (like a movie, in the third person) with him using the intensity of finals to his advantage, looking capable and confident and professional. Then he would use the desired image to replace the old one, with the "swoosh" technique. He would repeat the exercise until the old image automatically triggers the new one. If the process isn't working

well, then the shooter needs to enhance the replacement image with all the details that make it desirable... back to those earlier exercises where he tried to figure out what details went into a picture that he experienced as "happy"... was it bright? Was it in color? Were the voices soft? Were they close or faraway? Were his muscles tense or relaxed? Did he feel warm or cool? Enhancing the replacement image with these representation details helps the process because the brain naturally "flows" towards the positive.

These techniques are things that successful people do automatically, and usually unconsciously. Successful people put negative images away in little fuzzy faraway boxes, or may even destroy them altogether... and successful people may think that everyone does it, because they really don't know anything about doing it any other way. The point Robbins makes is that anyone can do it, and by modeling our own brain control on the brain control of successful people, we too can achieve success.

Another point that Robbins makes about how we represent the world to ourselves is whether we form most of the images in the first person or most of them in the third person. The first-person representations tend to

tie us emotionally to events and people and the third-person representations tend to keep us aloof or emotionally distant. His point is not that one is inherently wrong or right, but that if we want to have balance in our lives, we need to consciously control which way we represent things... too much first-person representation tends to make us overly sensitive and take things too personally and too much third-person representation tends to rob our lives of joy.

Robbins then applies the same approach to our beliefs. He says that people store the things they believe in the left side of their brains and the things that they are uncertain about in the right side of their brains. He says that as the uncertainty changes and becomes a belief, we change the way we represent it. For example, the shooter who is absolutely certain that he can shoot one perfect shot may still be uncertain that he can shoot a perfect match. Using Robbins' approach, the shooter would picture his image of shooting a perfect shot and assess how he is picturing it... is it in color? Is it a first-person image? Is it a still frame or a video? Is it bright? Are the sounds loud or soft, close or faraway? Are his muscles soft or firm? Then the shooter would picture the situations he is uncertain about and assess all of the details in

the representation. Then the shooter would use the "belief" representation details to re-paint the picture of the uncertain situation. Eventually, the feeling of uncertainty fades and a new belief is formed. This technique could be a very empowering one for shooters who have the skill, but have not yet developed the self-image required to become a champion.

However, as Robbins says, we all have filters that govern what we allow ourselves to believe, including whether we believe we can control our beliefs! Those larger governors fall into two categories:

- Unconscious benefits that we derive from our beliefs and
- Our value system.

Both of these are discussed in detail later in the book. Before we get to them, Robbins has more to say about how we structure our experience...

Chapter VII - The Syntax of Success

This is a fairly complicated chapter, but the message is key to understanding the rest of Robbins' book. The basic idea is that individual people have a particular order in which they input sensory data and represent things in their minds... and that this order is an integral part of

the state that they put themselves in.

The basic elements of this syntax (or order) are:

- Visual;
- Auditory; and
- Kinesthetic.¹

And we work with these basic sensory elements in two fundamental ways: as external or internal input.²

For example, for the shooter, the mental rehearsal of the sight picture is visual-internal and the actual sight picture is visual-external. The shooter's mental program is probably auditory-internal and the sound of the gunshot is auditory-external. The feeling of the trigger on the finger is kinesthetic-external and the feeling that the shooting position is exactly right is kinesthetic-internal.

What Robbins' says is that we each have our own "signature" way of representing things. We have one particular way of ordering our sensory input that gives us a feeling of being resourceful (and another syntax

¹ There are other elements of syntax, such as gustatory and olfactory; however, these are not as commonly used.

² There are other ways we work with input, such as auditory-tonal (the tone of something heard) or auditory-digital (the meaning of something heard).

that gives us the feeling of being less capable, depressed).

For example, if the shooter pictures himself in a match that went very very well, and then analyzes his syntax for that picture, he can then use the syntax to make him experience the same state in a different application. So, when I think of one of my favorite victories (the winning of the Lt Governor's medal in 1999), the first thing I see is a big visual image that is warm and bright and sunny. Then I feel warm and snug, like sunshine is on my skin, and I see and feel myself strolling along the range. Then I hear conversation in the background, softly babbling like a brook. Robbins would analyze this as having the following syntax: Visual-External (the first bright picture); Kinesthetic-Internal (the warm feeling); Visual-External (image of strolling); Kinesthetic-Internal (feeling of strolling); and Auditory-Tonal (babbling brook). So, that's my syntax for an empowered confident state. Therefore, if I want to reproduce that state, I need to reproduce that syntax.

This is exactly the type of analysis that Robbins performed in order to train the US Army pistol shooters (outlined in the previous issue of CoachNet). First he examined the beliefs of the top shooters and compared

them to the beliefs of soldiers who had not shot well. Then he analyzed the syntax and strategies (the combination of internal representations, their characteristics and their order) of the top shooters. Finally, he modeled their physiology.

He used this information to produce better shooters faster than the army had been able to before. And then he went back to the top shooters taught them to enhance their own strategies... and their results.

Robbins emphasizes the point that teachers and coaches would be able to do their jobs better if they were aware of their students/athletes learning syntax. His view is that most kids who have trouble in school are not "learning-disabled" but they are "strategy-disabled"; i.e., they need to learn how to use their own resources in order to learn the lesson content. He says that he is certain that the greatest problem in education is that teachers don't know how their students learn, and they don't know how to reach them or to teach them.

So, if you're a coach and you're not a mind reader... how do you figure out what your athlete needs to succeed? Well, you need to be able to figure out his mental strategies... his internal

representations, their characteristics and their order.

Chapter VIII - How to Elicit Someone's Strategy

Whenever you feel as if you have "instant rapport" with someone, you have discovered his strategy without necessarily knowing that you have. You may think that your rapport is based on the content of your interaction, but Robbins' view is that it is based on the syntax. You may have had the experience of being in "violent agreement" with someone, where you feel like you are arguing, yet you both have the same opinion... this is two strategies of communicating that do not work well together!

People will tell you all you need to know about their strategies. They do it verbally and they do it with body language.

Robbins characterizes the following general types:

- Visual people see the world in pictures; they talk quickly because they are describing the pictures they see and have trouble keeping up; they use expressions like, 'I see a pattern emerging'.
- Auditory people speak more slowly, carefully choosing their words; they use their

voice to effect, as tonality is important to them; they tend to use expressions like, 'That sounds right to me.'

- Kinesthetic people are likely to speak even more slowly, deeply and sonorously, as if they are letting the sound flow through them; they tend to use expressions like, 'I catch your drift'.

All people use some elements of each of the above modes, but each individual tends to have one system that dominates. By watching an individual, you can get a sense of which mode he is using. It's all in the eyes. For the vast majority of people, if they are remembering something, their eyes tend to move slightly leftward and if they are creating something, their eyes tend to move slightly right³.

- If they are in a visual mode, their eyes will tend to move upward (right for visual creations and left for visual memories).
- If they are in an auditory mode, their eyes will tend to move horizontally (right for creating new sounds or left for remembering familiar ones).
- If the person is talking to themselves (using the

auditory-digital mode), their eyes tend to move low left.

- If the person is in a kinesthetic mode (which includes feeling emotions, the sense of touch, as well as feelings of muscle movement), their eyes tend to move low right.

When the shooter is trying to put himself into a kinesthetic mode (as he would when he is setting up his shooting position), he needs to move his eyes to a low right position in order to access his kinesthetic system. When the shooter is mentally rehearsing the sight picture, his eyes will need to be in the "visual memory" position, that is, they need to be looking upper left, even if they are closed.

For the coach to elicit the strategy or state that the shooter needs to perform well, the shooter needs to be completely involved in picturing the desirable situation. Then the coach can ask a series of questions to understand the detailed characteristics of the state. (Robbins provides a suggested dialogue to help the coach (or employer, or salesperson, or teacher, or therapist) model these details.)

So how do you motivate a group, or a team? Robbins suggests that a motivational speaker needs to 'have something for everyone'...

needs to have a hook for those who are visual, a hook for those who are auditory and a hook for those who are kinesthetic. The speaker needs to vary his tone to catch the interest of all three types.

Robbins then models what it takes to make a person feel totally loved. Of course, each person is different. He emphasizes that modeling what your significant other needs in order to feel totally loved "is worth far more than the price of this book".

He also models what it takes to wake up quickly in the morning. He suggests that if you are feeling drowsy during the day, you need only accelerate the pace of your internal dialogue in order to energize yourself. Coaches and shooters will recognize this technique. It is the technique we use to get shooters to pick up the pace and shoot more quickly. Specifically, in order to make the shot release happen faster, we ask the shooter to use a shorter, sharper, faster mental program. And in order to improve the rhythm of the between-shot activities, we give them a specific order and mentally run the list faster.

As Robbins said at the beginning of the book, there are two ways to get into a resourceful state: one is mental (which is what we

³ For a very small number of people, it is opposite.

have been discussing) and the other is physiological (the subject of the next chapter).

**Chapter IX -
Physiology: The Avenue of
Excellence**

Robbins says that one way to get yourself into a state is to act as if you are already there. It is fast and it always works. The mind and the body are aspects of one thing, and when your body (your physiology) changes so does your mental representation, your feelings, and your attitudes.

If, as a coach, you have a shooter who says, "My confidence is shaken and I can't shoot well today," tell him to act as if he can. Tell him to stand as if he can shoot well, to breathe as if he can shoot well, and to make his face look like he can shoot well today. When the shooter's physiology changes, his state changes. He can then access a resourceful state. He will then be able to shoot as well as his current level will allow. He can then express his skill.

Robbins says that one of the strongest, most empowering aspects of physiology is congruence. Congruence is sameness of a person's mind and body. People whose physiology exactly expresses their inner mental state are among the most impressive people in the world.

People like John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. Their stance, movement, gestures, breathing, tonality... every little detail of their physiology... exactly matches their inner representations. Their physiology sends one single message (and there are no conflicting messages) from the way the shoulders are thrown back to the level gaze to the rhythm and tonality of their words. There is only one message, and it is a message of power.

For the shooter who would be a champion, he should associate with champions, and he should model their physiology. He should copy every little detail of their posture, gestures, breathing, facial expressions, etc. I will always remember watching Stenvaag win all three of the men's events at a World Cup in Fort Benning. His physiology was distinct and completely congruent. His posture was relaxed and solid; in fact, he made me think of a gentle giant. His face was also relaxed, yet alert and friendly looking. He had a pleasant look on his face, a little bit of a smile played on his lips. His gestures were purposeful and firm. All of his motions were fluid and smooth. When he spoke, his voice was soft yet firm, the tones round and not quite deep, and his words were moderately paced. He was

the picture of being relaxed, in control and completely confident. Finally, Robbins emphasizes that how we fuel our body is an important part of our physiology. It is important enough to be the subject of the next chapter.

**Chapter X -
Energy: The Fuel of Excellence**

Robbins says that the foundation of physiology is how we nurture and cleanse our bodies. Robbins decided five years before he wrote the book that he wanted to improve his physiology, lose some weight and improve his energy levels. He found people who were vibrant, strong and energized. He modeled them and then copied what they did. He came up with six principles or keys to healthy living. These are:

1. Breathing. Not only does breathing deliver oxygen to the blood, deep breathing also stimulates the activities of the lymph system, which is the system that transports toxins away from the cells. (The lymph system does not have a pump; it relies on breathing and muscle movement; therefore, deep breathing and exercise are keys to keeping your body healthy.) Deep breathing exercises (also advocated in Yoga) and aerobic exercise are both important.

2. Eat your water. Robbins advocates eating foods that are

high in water content, primarily fresh fruits and vegetables (including sprouts).

3. Eat the right foods in the right combination. Robbins says that since proteins (like meat, milk, cheese, nuts) need acid to digest and starchy foods (like potatoes, cereal, bread, etc.) require an alkaline digestive medium, you should not eat them together. (Yes, that's meat and potatoes, cereal with milk, bread and cheese... that should NOT be eaten together!)

4. You can eat a lot... if you eat small amounts over a long lifetime. Or, if you must eat a lot at one sitting, make it a water-rich food like salad.

5. Eat fruit on an empty stomach. Fruit is digested in the small intestine, and needs a clear path to get there (or it ferments in the stomach, causing gas).

6. The protein myth. Robbins says that we do not need the high levels of protein that we have been told we need. He says that if you must eat meat, one serving a day is lots, and best if it is pasture-grazed (i.e., not loaded with growth hormones and other additives)⁴. And, he says, dairy products are not very good for you either.

Robbins acknowledges that some of these principles may be contrary to what you believe. He cites studies and evidence to support the principles and he suggests that the reader try them before they discount them. And you can use the modeling techniques described in earlier chapters to help you "let go" of any favorite foods that are not contributing to your healthy, energized and vibrant physiology.

Section II - The Ultimate Success Formula

Chapter XI - Limitation Disengage: What Do You Want?

Robbins emphasizes that in order to find success, you must know what you want. You must have a clear picture of the outcome you desire. This will enable all of your resources to work towards that outcome. It will enable you to recognize when you are off-course and need to adjust your plans.

Robbins leads the reader through a goal-setting exercise that starts with "dreaming". He calls it dreaming in that you start with everything that you really want, no limitations. Pretend, he says, that you could have everything you want... pretend you are a king! Describe everything as outcomes, using the following five rules:

1. Be positive. Don't state what you don't want... state what you do want.

2. Be specific. Describe your outcome completely, using all your senses. Set a date, an exact time or a term.

3. Have a confirmation plan. You need to be able to tell when you have met your goal. Describe what it will look like, feel like and sound like when you have achieved it.

4. Be in control. You are the designer and builder of your outcome. Make sure you have direct control to make it happen.

5. Check the consequences. Make sure your outcome is moral and worthy, that it benefits you and other people, and that it in no way harms any person or environment.

Robbins then frames a question to the reader that I believe is brilliant. He asks, "If you knew you could not fail, what would you do? If you were absolutely certain of success, what activities would you pursue, what actions would you take?"

The goal-setting exercise that Robbins recommends requires an hour or so of the reader's time. He steps the reader through it as follows:

⁴ Robbins does not mention wild game.

1. Make an inventory of your dreams.
2. Put a time estimate on each dream... when you expect to reach the outcome.
3. Pick out the four most important goals for this year.
4. Make sure you have described each according to the five rules given above.
5. List the resources you already have. Include your own traits and skills, as well as time, energy, friends, money, tools, etc. that you can use.
6. Describe several times in your life that you were totally successful.
7. Describe the kind of person that you would need to be to achieve your goals.
8. Record anything that is currently preventing you from reaching your goals.
9. Create a step-by-step plan to achieve each of your key goals. And here again, Robbins says something that I think is brilliant: "Make sure your plans include something you could do today."
10. Identify a model (or several models). Identify people who have achieved what you want to

achieve and examine their qualities and behaviors. Let them give you advice... imagine what they might say.

11. Create your ideal day. Imagine that you have accomplished your main goals and describe the kind of day that you have. How does it begin? What do you do? Where do you go? What people do you see, talk to, and listen to? How do you feel at the end of the day?

12. Design your perfect environment. Is it in the city or in the woods or by the beach? What tools do you have... piano, or art supplies, or a computer, or sports equipment? What support people would you have?

For many shooters, the ideal environment would have a range and a gym, and the support people would include a coach and a massage therapist.

The main idea that Robbins has here is that if you don't imagine it, you won't work towards it. If you do imagine it, then all of your resources (both conscious and unconscious) will not only work towards it, but also will help refocus and change your efforts whenever a path proves unsuccessful. In fact, he says that the more precisely we describe what we want, the more effective we are at achieving it.

In our next issue of CoachNet, we continue our synopsis, review and commentary on Robbins' book "Unlimited Power", including such topics as:

- The power of precision
- The magic of rapport
- Excellence
- Problem solving
- Anchoring yourself to success

"Only a few people are truly awake and they live in a constant state of amazement."

Meg Ryan
in "Joe versus the Volcano"

"Learning ... should be a joy and full of excitement. It is life's greatest adventure."

Taylor Caldwell

"Whatever creativity is, it is in part a solution to a problem."

Brian Aldess