

THIS ISSUE

Unlimited Power... We continue our 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 Three** includes such topics as the power of precision, the magic of rapport, the distinctions of excellence, handling resistance and solving problems, and the power of perspective.

NEXT ISSUE

Unlimited Power - Conclusion... We complete our 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 Four** includes such topics as anchoring yourself to success, using your values to develop success, five keys to wealth and happiness, the power of persuasion and the challenge of 'living excellence'.

One Thin Wire... A story about shooters reaching past their limitations to new levels of success, originally published by Precision Shooting.

UNLIMITED POWER - PART THREE

Chapter XII - The Power of Precision

Robbins says that when Grinder and Bandler¹ studied successful people they found that one of their most important attributes was precise communications skills. They also found that these people distinguished between what they needed to know and what they didn't need to know and focused on the former.

Robbins says that in order to get what you want, you need to ask for it. And then he provides guidelines for how to do this:

1. Be specific.
2. Ask the right person (someone who can help you).
3. Create value for them.
4. Ask with authenticity. Be confident, show your conviction and sound sincere.
5. Keep asking until you get what you want. (Change the message or the person you ask, but persist.)

¹ John Grinder and Richard Bandler are the inventors of NLP, neuro-linguistic programming, on which much of Robbins' thinking is based.

In order to keep your communications as precise and to the point as you need, Robbins suggests the following guidelines:

1. Universals rarely are. If you hear yourself use a universal term like, 'all' or 'never', question whether the statement is really true, and if it is not true, restate it specifically until it is true. So, the shooter who says, "I always blow my last shot," needs to state this more honestly and specifically, probably something like, "I blow my last shot when I give up trying" or "I blow my last shot when I let myself get nervous." As negative as they are, these are statements that the coach can start to do something with.

2. Negatives don't go anywhere. If you use words like 'don't' or 'can't' or 'shouldn't' you are limiting without creating the picture of the possibilities you want to communicate. If the shooter says, "I can't read the wind," he is closing the door to learning how to read the wind. The shooter needs to say, "I need to learn to memorize the details of the flags in order to improve my wind reading."

3. Verbs need to be specific. When you use a verb, make sure that you are conveying the precise action that is involved. Make sure you answer the question "how". It is not enough

for a coach to say, "You need to develop a smaller holding pattern" without telling the shooter specifically how that can be done.

4. Nouns need to be specific, whether they depict locations, people, concepts or things. One of the most common, 'fuzzy' nouns is "they", as in "they are against it." This just puts you in a "stuck state"... you just have to ask, "Who are they and what exactly are they against?" When you get the answers, you have something to work with.

5. "Too much!" This is the dreaded 'unknown comparative'. Your idea or plan is met with the response of "That's too expensive," or "That's too hard," or "That will take too long". To get to the specific objection, you need to ask, "Compared to what?"

Robbins identifies several other mental traps that a lack of precision can create. There are certain words that are like red flags to a precision communicator... judgmental words like "good" or "bad", for example. These should be challenged with "According to whom?" or "In what way?" or "How do you know that?"

Another red flag is a sentence that includes the phrase "made me"; for example, "He made me mad." Think about the causal

relationship here: if you are in control of your mental representations, then you can "make you" mad, but no one else can.

Similarly, if someone says, "I just know... something," you need to ask, "How do you know that?" This one is particularly useful for querying your own internal dialogue or self talk.

In addition, there are words that are inherently vague, and clear communicators will avoid them when they speak and challenge them when they hear them. These words are basically nouns that have been constructed from verbs, such as "attention", which was formed from the process of "attending", or "experience", which was formed from the process of "experiencing". The easiest way to get more specificity is to change the noun back into a verb; for example, ask, "What do you want to experience?" One of the phrases often heard in shooting circles is "attention control"; perhaps newcomers would better understand "control of the process of attending".

Robbins refers back to NLP (neuro-linguistic programming), where asking the right questions is emphasized. And the right questions are "outcome questions". This simply means changing the direction of the

comment away from the problem and towards the solution or outcome. As a coach, you can really help your shooter with this technique. If a shooter says, "I flinched on that shot," ask him "What is the solution to flinching?" Another tip Robbins gives is to avoid asking "why" and ask "how" instead. For example, instead of asking why a shooter didn't do well (on that shot, on that match) ask him what he needs to perform better or how you can help him get there.²

As Robbins says, if you try a piece in a jigsaw puzzle and it does not fit, you don't take it as a failure and stop... you take it as feedback and carry on. Keep looking for the question or phrase that will transform a problem into a communication that will lead to a solution.

Chapter XIII - The Magic of Rapport

What is rapport? You know it when you have it with someone, but do you know what causes it?

Robbins says that a feeling of rapport is generated when you see something similar to yourself in another person.

² This is core to the MilCun method of Solution Analysis. We also invented the phrase, "Great advice, Coach, but how?" to focus the coaching on how to get things done.

So how do we create rapport? We create or discover things we have in common.

You can mirror interests (like shooting sports), associations (like friends in common), and beliefs (political, social, sports theories, etc.). These are communicated through words, but verbal communications is a very small part of the whole communications package. Experts estimate that the words we use provide only 7 percent of what we communicate. Another 38 percent comes from our tone of voice. The biggest part of our communications comes from our physiology or our body language... our facial expressions, our gestures, our posture, and our movement.

Even if all we have in common is simply body language, rapport develops. If you learn to mirror another person's body language (subtly, of course), you will not only develop rapport, you will genuinely start to understand them better. You need to develop keen observation skills and practice for a while, but after a while you will start to do it automatically.

One of the keys to developing rapport is to identify a person's primary representational system: visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. As previously described, there are a whole set of behaviors that

go with each of these systems. Once you have identified a person's representational system, all you have to do is match it.

If you think this is manipulative, then be aware that it is what you have been doing unconsciously all of your life. When you do it unconsciously, you are not particularly selective about who you choose to develop rapport with... more likely, they choose you. In fact, if you do not mirror someone, in order to develop rapport, he must mirror you. In the end, it's not a matter of manipulation; it is a matter of volunteering to be the one that is flexible enough to enter another person's world.

The most effective leaders in the world are adept at all three representational systems (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). We tend to trust people who communicate with all three systems, and who are congruent (are giving the same message from all three systems as well as with the meaning of their words). Successful people have a great talent for creating rapport.

Once you have learned to mirror effectively, you can add another dimension to your skill. Robbins calls it "pacing" and "leading". Once you have mirrored the person and have established rapport, you continue "pacing" with his body language for a time,

and then you start to make small changes to your own body language ("leading"). If you have established sufficient rapport, the person will follow your lead.

One essential teaching of NLP is that **the meaning of your communication is the response you elicit**. For coaches, this is a very important statement.

The best coaches establish rapport, so their message gets through. The best coaches know not only their subject (shooting) but also their students (shooters). They understand each athlete's representational system, and cater to it. They know how to transfer their knowledge from their own mental map to the shooter's mental map.

Robbins says that there's another way to establish rapport, and this is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter XIV - Distinctions of Excellence: Metaprograms

Robbins says that the quickest way to find out just how different people are, is to do a little public speaking. You can say the same thing to a room full of people and get a hundred different reactions. The reason is that everyone has his own internal way of sorting or filtering your message. The

filters they are using are called "metaprograms".

These filters help us deal with information. Large amounts of information can be processed by our brains because these filters (or metaprograms) categorize, select and delete the information before we become aware of it.

To communicate effectively with a person, you have to understand his metaprograms. There are seven key areas to understand:

1. Moving towards or moving away. Humans are motivated by moving towards things that are pleasurable and/or by moving away from things that are not. While people will use both of these techniques to navigate through life, usually one dominates. To find out which way a person moves, ask him what he wants in something - his profession, his shooting career, his family. If he tells you what he wants, he is moving towards; if he tells you what he doesn't want, he is moving away.

If you want to motivate your shooter, you need to know which metaprogram he is using. If he is moving towards, you can motivate him to train by emphasizing the good things that will happen when he trains carefully and well. If he is moving away, you can motivate him to train by emphasizing the bad things that will happen if he

fails to attend to his training regime.

2. Internal or external frames of reference. If you have an external frame of reference, you will consider the opinions of others to determine the worth of something. If you have an internal frame of reference, your proof of something's worth comes from the inside... it's right because it feels right to you.

This pair of metaprograms is context-dependent. If you have the benefit of years of experience, you are more likely to have a strong internal frame of reference. If you are new to something, you are likely to rely more on an external frame of reference.

An effective leader (an effective coach) has to have a strong internal frame of reference. While the leader or the coach has to be able to take in new information from the outside, he will usually assimilate it into his own frame of reference.

3. Sorting by self or sorting by others. Some people look at things in the world in terms of "what's in it" for them alone; some people look at things in the world in terms of what they can do for themselves and others. People don't usually fall into one extreme (self-centered egotist) or the other (selfless martyr).

4. Matchers and mismatchers. Matchers tend to see similarities, or similarities with exceptions and mismatchers tend to see differences, or differences with exceptions.

Among shooters and shooting coaches, I believe that matchers who see similarities with exceptions are the most effective. The shooting process needs to be consistently the same, unless the conditions change. Mismatchers will tend to feel obliged to vary their routine, and will sabotage the very process that is bringing them success.

5. The verification (or convincer) metaprogram. The first part of the convincer metaprogram is "what does it take to convince the person" and the second part is "how often does that proof have to be demonstrated?"

The "what does it take" part refers to whether the person needs to see it, hear about it, do it, and/or read about it.

The second part refers to the number of times that the proof has to be demonstrated: once, two or more, over a period of time, or every time.

People have many different needs when it comes to being convinced.

For some people, one demonstration is sufficient and they will continue to believe and trust until they feel betrayed. Others need more reassurance, or proof, to maintain their state of being convinced. It is critical for a coach to understand the shooter's needs in this regard. If the shooter needs frequent or constant reinforcement that he is doing the right thing, then the coach needs to give it to him.

6. Possibility versus necessity. Some people are motivated by necessity - they more or less take what life offers, rather than seeking out what they really want. Other people are motivated more by what they want to do than what they have to do - they seek out possibilities and opportunities.

7. Working style. Some people work best when they are "independent"; they have to run their own show. Others function best as a part of a group; we call their strategy "cooperative". A third group, using a so-called "proximity" strategy, is in between; they like to work with others, but take responsibility for their own task.

Many shooters are "independent" and that sometimes makes coaching them a bit of a challenge. The best approach that I have found is what I think of as "transaction coaching".

There is no contract with this type of shooter, no ongoing relationship. But there can be a transaction between the coach and shooter when the shooter sees something of value that the coach can provide.

Shooters with a "proximity" strategy are the best to work with because they want to take responsibility for their own shooting, but they enjoy the coaching relationship as well. (I have not personally met any successful shooters who use the "cooperative" strategy in anything other than social situations.)

When I read this section of Robbins' book, a light bulb went on. I had recently spoken at a sports association meeting where, at the end of my presentation, one member of the audience spoke very rudely and derogatorily. My partner said to me afterwards, "He can't see that there's a world beyond his own front sight." Exactly the right call. The guy is a "sort by self" kind of guy. My message had to do with a project that would benefit the community, not him personally. My message didn't reach him at all. Worse yet, I described the project in terms of "moving towards" a possible great future, and this guy was a "moving away" kind of guy. I failed to use what I think of as "scare tactics"... but using them

and personalizing them to the individual might have produced the response I wanted.

There are lots of different metaprograms that are used by lots of different people. Some people sort by logic, others by feelings. Some people respond best to details first and others need to see the "big picture" first. Some people are excited by beginnings and others are not satisfied until things are completed.

Metaprograms can be changed. Sometimes a "significant emotional event" will cause us to change them. If you've been burned by your metaprogram or if you've missed a big opportunity because of it, you may be motivated to try another method.

The other way you can change is... by deciding to.

Understanding metaprograms can help you communicate more effectively with others. Metaprograms can also help you understand yourself and, when you want to change your behavior, changing them can help you do so.

Chapter XV - How to Handle Resistance and Solve Problems

Every shooting coach has had to face shooter resistance at one

time or another. Even the most easy-going athlete occasionally has a sticking point, especially when he is a little nervous about an upcoming competition. And most shooters are pretty strong-willed and independent, so the shooting coach often has to handle built-in resistance before he can get on to solving any problems.

Robbins key point is that in order to truly handle resistance you must be flexible. Many of us think that the "other guy" needs to be flexible. Actually, if you're the one with the point of view to communicate, you're the one that needs to be flexible. As he says, "You can't communicate by force of will; you can't bludgeon someone into understanding your point of view. You can only communicate by constant, resourceful, attentive flexibility."

If what you've tried before isn't working, break the pattern. Try a new approach. Say something different. If that doesn't work, try another approach. Stay friendly, be flexible, and persist. Robbins' writes: "there is no such thing as resistance, there are only inflexible communicators who push at the wrong time and in the wrong direction."

The way to handle resistance is to "not disagree". Well, how do you ever get your own point of

view across if you agree with the other guy? Start your remarks with phrases that indicate that you understand and accept his point of view. "I appreciate..." or "I respect..." or "I agree and..." This way, you acknowledge his point of view and you respect him for having a point of view. When you start this way, the shooter thinks, "Well, he heard me and understood me..." and if you're lucky, the shooter further thinks, "I guess it's my turn to hear and understand." In any case, he is more receptive to hearing your point of view.

When you use the expression, "I agree and..." you are not disagreeing, you are adding your own ideas to his. This is a good way not only to improve his receptiveness to your ideas but can also initiate a creative dialog between the two of you.

Robbins later makes a related point about the use of the word "but". He advocates that you banish the word "but" from your vocabulary. Instead, use the word "and". I couldn't agree more. (Long ago, I took two words out of my vocabulary... "but" and "should". This improved my own internal dialog, and improved my communications with other people.) When you use the word "but" you negate your athlete's entire thought. If you say, "I agree, but..." your athlete says to himself, "He doesn't

agree at all. He is now going to tell me why I'm wrong." Whereas, if you say, "I agree, and..." your athlete says to himself, "He agrees with me and he has something to add to my thoughts."

The other key point that Robbins makes is that we are creatures of habit, even when the habit is self-destructive. He recounts a lovely story about a psychiatrist visiting a patient in a mental hospital. The patient insisted that he was Jesus Christ, not just spiritually but completely. The psychiatrist one day asked him, "Are you Jesus Christ?" and the man replied, "Yes, my son." The psychiatrist said that he would be back in a minute and he left. The man was confused, but in a few minutes, the psychiatrist returned with a measuring tape. He asked the man to spread his arms and he measured his arm span; in addition, he measured his height from head to toe. Then the psychiatrist left. When he returned, he had a couple of long boards, some large spikes and a hammer. The patient asked him what he was doing. The psychiatrist asked him, "Are you Jesus?" Again the patient replied, "Yes, my son." The psychiatrist said, "Then you know why I'm here." Apparently, this cured the patient for he then excitedly declared, "I'm not Jesus! I'm not Jesus!"

This is an example of what Robbins (and psychiatrists) call a "pattern interrupt". This is a device that can help you break a pattern or a habit that is not serving your purposes. We have all, at one time or another, let ourselves go down a path that we know is not constructive, yet we carry on. Arguments with family often go this way. So can coaching situations go this way.

I once had a coach who was in the habit of saying things like, "If your standing scores were a little higher, you'd be shooting world championship 3-position." He wasn't a stupid man; he probably knew that this wasn't a good way to motivate a shooter; yet he was stuck in the habit of making this type of remark. If I had known then what I know now, I would have said, "I agree and I need help to improve my standing. What do I need to work on?" This would have helped him break the pattern, and certainly would have gotten me further in my shooting.

Robbins makes the same two points over and over in this chapter. He repeats his point of view because he knows that what he is saying is counter to what most of us have been taught. The first point, in a nutshell, is that you can "persuade better through agreement than through conquest." The second point is

that you are in control of your own behavior.

And the key application of these two truths is that when you are communicating (persuading), you must be flexible.

The point that Robbins does not cover directly is that in order to be flexible communicators, we need to stay focused on the objective. The objective is to persuade the other person to change his point of view. (The objective is not to prove how smart we are, or how right we are.) We must have the emotional maturity to let go of our own ego long enough to appreciate the athlete's ego.

Chapter XVI - Reframing: The Power of Perspective

Robbins starts this chapter by making the point that our own perspective determines how we see the world, and how we interpret what goes on in it. One example he uses is the image that can be seen either as a lovely girl or as an old hag, depending on how you look at it.

His key point is that people who are successful consistently represent their experiences in ways that support them in producing even greater results for themselves and for others.

If you are in the habit of seeing things in ways that do not support you, Robbins says, you need to "reframe"; i.e., you need to change your frame of reference. There are two types of reframing that Robbins describes. The first, he calls "context reframing" which turns a bad situation to an advantage. He cites Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer as a classic example of context reframing, where the socially undesirable red nose enables Rudolph to "save the day". In shooting sports, the female's lesser upper body strength is reframed as a lower centre of gravity that provides greater stability.

The second type of reframing Robbins calls "content reframing", which you change the way you see, hear or represent the situation. The example Robbins gives is the blind boy whose mother was so good at reframing, he believed he had "unusual vision", a special insight into people and the world. The most common example of reframing for the coach is enabling the athlete to see mistakes as a learning situation, or to see weaknesses as a training objective, or to see steps up the competition ladder where others might see matches lost.

Reframing is the art of the advertiser and the politician.

Most of us understand that professionals put their products into the most favorable possible light, regardless of their shortcomings. We, as individuals, usually understand the process applies to ourselves when we are writing a resume or going for a new job interview. Robbins' key point is that we need to be able to reframe ourselves and our situation all the time, constantly and consistently seeing our abilities and our experiences as contributing to our ultimate success.

When you are faced with a very upsetting situation, it is sometimes difficult to reframe it. Robbins offers several practical ways to get control:

- ❖ Put yourself into a resourceful state (as described in the first section of the book).
- ❖ Disassociate yourself by putting the image of the negative situation (or the key person in the situation) in the palm of your hand.
- ❖ Ask yourself to see the situation from someone else's point of view.
- ❖ Pretend the situation is a movie you are watching in a theatre and play it in reverse or in fast forward, then reconstruct it as a cartoon, then set it to silly music.

As a coach, this may be more than you are willing to guide your athlete through. However, you can help him feel more resourceful, disassociate and benefit from a negative experience by asking him one simple question: "If you were a coach, what would you say to an athlete who had just gone through this type of experience?"

As a coach, I always try to get my athletes to focus on the answers to the following questions:

1. What did you learn from this situation that can help you (and others) in the future?
2. Of the things that happened, what could you have controlled in your favor and how will you do that in the future?
3. Of the things that happened, what could you not control... of those things, which could you influence, avoid or neutralize in the future? (Are there any other contingency plans you need?)
4. What are you going to do right now that will be your first step towards a better situation next time?

Robbins cautions that we are not all fully consciously aware of the

deeper reasons (secondary benefits) of our behaviors, and that until we are, we may not be able to produce a long-lasting change. He gives an example of a housewife who, when her foot turns numb, gets the secondary benefits of a helpful husband. When her doctor solves her foot problem, she loses her secondary benefits. Therefore, the foot problem reappears.

In our next issue of CoachNet, we relate this situation to the shooting coach and we continue our synopsis, review and commentary on Robbins' book "Unlimited Power", including such topics as:

- Anchoring yourself to success,
 - Using your values to develop success,
 - Five keys to wealth and happiness,
 - The power of persuasion, and
 - The challenge of 'living excellence'.
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