

## **THIS 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.

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## **NEXT ISSUE**

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

**Toughness Training...** a synopsis of an article by Ben Kallen about how top athletes triumph under pressure.

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**"The man who has no problems  
is out of the game."**

*Elbert Hubbard*

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## **UNLIMITED POWER - PART FOUR (CONCLUSION)**

### **Chapter XVI - Reframing: The Power of Perspective, concluded**

In order to be able to reframe a situation, to change our perspective on it, we need to understand our own behaviors. 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. His example is the housewife who when her foot turns numb gets the secondary benefits of a helpful husband. When she solves her foot problem, she loses her secondary benefits. Therefore, the foot problem reappears.

For shooters and coaches, this problem may appear simply as a habit, or a rut. The shooter, for example, makes the National Team, but can't excel beyond that. The coach is most familiar with this level of athlete and doesn't push the athlete harder (although he may not be aware that he is not). The athlete is comfortable with his own level of performance and doesn't push himself to try new things that could give him an edge. Both the coach and the shooter have fallen into a "comfort zone" of modest achievement. Neither one wants to push outside of the comfort

zone. Both are a little afraid that if they make any big changes, they will lose the current level of success.

This situation is surprisingly common. I have had very senior coaches say to me, "I know his position is very bad, but he is shooting good scores, so I don't want to change it." This comment reflects a lack of confidence or a certain amount of comfort in the current situation. In some cases the shooter is using a position that will cause them long-term repetitive-use injuries and in other cases the shooter is simply going to "top out" and reach performance limits prematurely.

The coach and the shooter both need to think in terms of possibilities... reframe their expectations in terms of what might be... consider the potential!

Robbins retells the famous story about Tom Watson, the founder of IBM. One of his employees had made a huge mistake that cost the company millions of dollars. The employee offered to resign and Watson said, "Are you kidding? We just spent ten million dollars educating you!"

### **Chapter XVII - Anchoring Yourself to Success**

Robbins explains the concept of anchoring as having a small trigger to access a complex set

of thoughts and feelings. He uses the example of the American flag triggering (for Americans) powerful emotions because the flag is associated with feelings of patriotism. He suggests that we can choose our anchors and use them to access powerful states.

This is a key point for athletes. An anchor can enable the athlete to instantly access a powerful state, a feeling of confidence and a sense of positive expectation.

Robbins says that anchors get created when a person is in an intense state and repeatedly associates the state with a specific stimulus, resulting in the stimulus and the state becoming neurologically linked. (Anchors can also be linked to negative states.)

This is the process that advertisers are very familiar with (for example, when you read the words, "Mr. Clean, Mr. Clean, Mr. Clean" do you also hear the jingle and see the cartoon character?). Propagandists are equally adept at producing this effect; for example, Hitler was a master at linking such things as Nazi salute to an entire nation. (On a more positive note, "I have a dream" resonates with millions of people who strived to make that dream a reality). And comedians, particularly with running jokes, are adept at

anchoring us with a particular facial expression (for example, Johnny Carson's smirk would have us laughing before he delivered the punch line) or a particular line (for example, Rodney Dangerfield's "take my wife").

The general point here is that there are many outside forces creating anchors for us. Some of them are helpful, but most are trivial or even destructive. The process by which we select them is often driven by others, usually unconscious and haphazard.

Robbins makes the point that anchoring is a tool used by many professional athletes. He gives the example of the tennis star who uses the bouncing of the tennis ball prior to serving as an anchor to access a high-performance state. Robbins says that he used anchoring when he worked with Michael O'Brien, the 1984 Olympic gold medalist (1500 freestyle) by linking the sound of the starter's gun to a top performance state.

The process of consciously creating an anchor is simple. First put yourself in the state you wish to anchor. Then provide a specific, unique stimulus as your experience the state.

The coach can help the shooter with this process. When the shooter is in the desired state, the coach gives him the stimulus,

such as a flash of a sight picture, or the sound of a shot, or the smell of gunpowder, or the feel of the finger on the trigger.

Ensuring that the shooter is in the desired state is very important. The coach needs to work with the shooter to achieve a fully intense and confident state and then, at the height of it, provide the stimulus. The stimulus needs to be clear, and must be replicated exactly.

The process needs to be repeated until the coach is sure that the shooter is anchored. The test of the anchor is its ability to produce the desired state on demand.

As a shooter, I have anchored myself to the sight picture. Years ago, I put pictures up around the house where I would come across them frequently and a little unexpectedly. The picture had the image of the perfect sight picture and the word "relax". It didn't take very long before the real sight picture (no matter how I felt before I got into the fire position) would provoke an instant relaxed state.

Another key point that Robbins makes is that we need to be aware of our anchors so that we can get rid of the ones that are ineffective and destructive and reinforce the ones that contribute to our success.

**Section III - Leadership: The Challenge of Excellence**

**Chapter XVIII - Values: The Ultimate Judgment of Success**

Robbins defines your values are your beliefs about what is right or wrong, good or bad. He says that we all fundamentally need to move towards our values, that we feel 'whole' when we are "fulfilling our values by our present behavior." Our values are shaped by our families, our peers, our heroes, the media, teachers and bosses. We may restructure our values when we choose a new goal. This often happens to our junior athletes, who may want to win a gold medal until they approach the age of cars, dating or university.

Most people are not completely conscious of their values, and not fully aware of their value hierarchy. For example, an honest man may lie to protect a friend because in his value hierarchy, friendship is more important than honesty.

Understanding a person's hierarchy of values is key to understanding, predicting and motivating their behavior. This is critical for good coaching. For example, if a shooter is motivated by the intense and solitary pleasure of individual mental effort, there is no point talking about the fun of meeting

other shooters or the thrill of shooting a finals in front of a big audience or standing on the podium to be awarded medals. Or, if a shooter is motivated by the travel of international competition, then stories of long hours of mental discipline will not likely turn his training efforts up a notch. The coach who discovers his athlete's values and tunes his coaching to them will have a long and enjoyable coaching relationship.

Very often, as coaches, we seek out athletes with similar values to our own... we see these athletes as people we "can relate to". As Robbins says, "common values form the basis for the ultimate rapport." The versatile coach seeks to understand the values of the athlete he is working with, so that he can use this very powerful tool to motivate him to reach his ultimate performance levels.

Values change as we go through life as do our goals... and so do the ways we demonstrate and confirm our values and goals.

Everyone who has coached young people knows all about values changing. What is difficult is tuning in to what the young person thinks is important right now, and helping them to see how outstanding performance in our sport is relevant to him. In fact, the struggles that most young

people go through during adolescence and young adulthood have everything to do with changing values, and the more a coach can help the athlete through this treacherous part of life, the more likely the athlete is to stay bonded with his coach and his sport.

Robbins quotes the philosopher Lao-Tsu many times in his book, and all of the quotes are good. The one he uses at this point in the book is one of my personal favorites:

*"He who knows much about others may be learned, but he who understands himself is more intelligent. He who controls others may be powerful, but he who has mastered himself is mightier still."*

**Chapter XIX - The Five Keys to Wealth and Happiness**

Robbins starts this chapter by asserting that you get from life what you ask of it. His thinking is along the lines of the old saying, "Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you are probably right."

He further asserts that he has discovered five things that go along with being successful; in fact, he says that they are critical to success.

1. Learn how to handle frustration. Not only does handling frustration well enable you to maintain a positive, resourceful state, becoming a success requires that you deal with a very large amount of frustration. In fact, Robbins says that if you're broke, it's probably because you don't handle frustration very well. "All successful people learn that success is buried on the other side of frustration." For coaches, helping an athlete to develop this skill and turn it into a power, is a key part of the coach's job and can become one of the most important skills the athlete can take away from his sport.

2. Learn how to handle rejection. Robbins relates this not only to business, but also to sport, arts, and relationships. The general idea is that in order to succeed, you need to be able to hear "no" and keep trying. You need to see opportunities to learn and to try again, rather than seeing failures. If a shot isn't in the x-ring (or whatever is the best place for your personal shooting sport), then see the shot placement as data and move on. Robbins repeats his theme by saying, "success is buried on the other side of rejection."

3. Learn to handle financial pressures. Robbins defines handling financial pressures as knowing how to get and how to

give, knowing how to earn and how to save. Robbins is an advocate of giving ten percent of your earnings, not because it makes you feel good (it does) but because you owe it, and because it helps other people know that someone cares. He then says that you should use another ten percent to reduce your debts and a third ten percent to build up capital to invest. Every amateur athlete in Canada has faced financial pressure. Most live below the poverty line. And most of the ones I have met, if they have no money to give back into the system, give their time.

4. Learn to handle complacency. If you get comfortable, Robbins says, you stop working, you stop growing and you stop adding value to your life and to the lives of others. There is no plateau, there is only climbing or sliding. This is critical for athletic success. Many athletes and coaches are willing to accept plateaus and they become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Another type of complacency that Robbins warns against is that of comparing yourself to others... you can always find someone who can't shoot as well as you... that's no measure. You need to compare your current capabilities with your own goals and possibilities.

5. Always give more than you expect to receive. Robbins says that this is truly the key to not

only success, but to happiness. He says that we all tend to think more about receiving than giving. Receiving is easy, he says. If you want to have a good life, you have to figure out how to give. He says the key to a good relationship is to give first and keep giving. Don't wait to receive. Robbins likens this to getting fruit from the earth... first you plant the seed, then you nurture the plant from start to fruition... you would never expect to get fruit from the earth without giving first. Most of the coaches I have met tend to be a little like the Johnny Appleseed model... throwing seeds of thoughts out around the shooting team without doing the follow-up tending and nurturing. The myth is that the coach is right, therefore the shooter will benefit. The reality is that if the coach is right, the shooter still needs support to let that seed grow and eventually produce its fruit.

Finally, Robbins says that the biggest myth about success is that it is a destination. The reality is that it is a journey.

#### **Chapter XX - Trend Creation: The Power of Persuasion**

Robbins points out that all of the tools he has discussed in this book are tools that advertisers use (in very concentrated form) to cement their messages in your mind. Robbins says that you can

be a persuader or be one of the persuaded. He advocates that you choose to direct your life (rather than be directed).

Robbins says that the ability to persuade is the ultimate power, and that communicating what you have to offer is the more important skill you can have.

Coaches are usually in a position of authority and trust. They can use their powers of persuasion to help the individual athlete and the team.

Shooters and coaches are both in a position to use their powers of persuasion in the public forum as well. Every individual reading this has persuaded at least one non-believer that we have a great sport that emphasizes personal self-discipline and control. You have also, as a coach, persuaded many more people that they can shoot better than they ever thought possible. How did you do it? You worked with the individual to change his internal representation of "shooting" or "shooting skill". You put them in a relaxed and resourceful state and then led them through an experience that used that state to produce effective results. You linked "shooting a good shot" with the state, and now you have a believer.

I have always been surprised and delighted with how much fun

people who have never touched a real firearm have when they are properly introduced to shooting. As a part of our Executive Challenge course this spring, we taught ten business people (CEOs and VPs) how to shoot a steel plate from half a Kilometer away. Some were petrified of guns. Some were just afraid they wouldn't be able to do it. When they all were able to do it after only a few hours of instruction and practice, they were thrilled. And their attitude towards guns had been transformed.

Robbins examples of trend creation are much bigger than mine, but they use the same structure. Put people in a positive, resourceful state and expose them to the message; link the message to a positive experience and a strong cue. There are few cues stronger than the firing of a gun, and we have that advantage.

Robbins says that creating a trend (the strongest form of persuasion) is really what leadership is all about. The first message of the book is to enable you to run your own brain. The next step is to take those capabilities and use your powers to make the world a better place... for your children and your family, for your athletes and the team, for your business associates and for every part of your world. He says that you can

do this one-on-one, one at a time, or you can do it in some form of mass persuasion.

Finally, Robbins says, the world is run by persuaders. He advocates that rather than being one of the persuaded, you become a persuader.

### **Chapter XXI - Living Excellence: The Human Challenge**

In this final chapter of the book, Robbins summarizes all that the reader has learned, and then he urges the reader to take action, to start making the changes that will lead to "Ultimate Power". He emphasizes that ultimate power does not mean always succeeding and never failing. Ultimate power means you learn from and make something of every experience in your life.

He also suggests that rather than working alone, you "find a team you can play on". Whether that's your family, your friends, your sports colleagues, your business colleagues, your community... you will benefit from the interaction. Make sure it's a team that challenges you. The members of a team can challenge you and help you grow. A team with synergy can do more than any of its members.

The next challenge is to become a leader, the head of something

or the best you can be at something.

A good coach is a good leader. A good leader has knowledge and understanding of what Robbins calls "the power of procession", a sense that great changes come from many small things. The leader must be able to project the outcome of his actions. The leader knows how to use his communications to empower others.

In the last few pages of the book, Robbins challenges the reader to share this information with others. He says that this is important for two reasons: first, because we all teach what we most need to learn; and secondly, because there is a unique joy that comes from helping another person make a positive change in his life.

He says the ultimate message of his book is to be a doer: take charge and take action.

Robbins says that if you read his book and say to yourself, "what a great book," and do nothing, then "we've wasted our time together." If, on the other hand, you start right now and make changes in how you run yourself and your life, then you will succeed.

It is in the spirit of sharing that I offer the next story here in CoachNet. The story is all about

shooting better, and applies several of the ideas that are in Robbins' book. When the story is done, I will tell you what happened to a personal friend (who is not a shooter) when she read the story.

*Editor's Note:*

Some CoachNet subscribers have asked where they can buy Anthony Robbins' book. It is in print, the most recent edition being the Simon & Schuster Free Press paperback edition 2003, ISBN 0-684-84577-6. I bought my copy at [www.amazon.ca](http://www.amazon.ca) and I'm sure it is widely available. I can't recommend the CD, as it is far too short to give the subject justice. The book, however, is excellent.

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"The education of a man is never completed until he dies."

*Robert E. Lee*

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## **ONE THIN WIRE**

*By Linda K. Miller and Keith A. Cunningham*

### **"Your attitude determines your altitude"**

Years ago, my brother-in-law decided to raise a few little pigs on his farm. Lacking a pig barn, and planning to keep them only for a few months, he decided to enclose them in the old orchard. The best containment system he could find for his purposes was an electric fence. He planted the little fence posts and strung one strand of wire around the enclosure. He put the piglets inside and turned on the power. One by one, the piglets tried to wander out of the pen, and one by one, they discovered the power of the electric fence. Within a couple of days, all the piglets decided they could not overcome the fence. And so, my brother-in-law turned the power off. Did the piglets rush out? No, they had already tested the strength of the fence and had decided that it was a superior force. So they stayed in the enclosure, held by one thin wire. The fence was no longer their master. They were prisoners of their own attitude towards the fence.

A couple of weeks ago, a shooter at an Ontario Rifle Association's Service Conditions match

complained that he had shot 20 points below his "average" because he was cold. It had rained (he didn't have rainwear) and then the wind was cold as he dried out (he didn't have warm outerwear either). I don't mean to sound smug, but I truly believe this shooter set himself up for failure. He was not prepared for the weather, and, in Canada as in most places, you can always expect to have weather! It wasn't so much that he couldn't shoot well when he was feeling cold, it was that feeling cold gave him the excuse he needed to justify not shooting well. His ability to perform was held back, not by the weather, but by his attitude towards the weather.

I grant you that the shooter genuinely felt the cold, as surely as those little piglets were genuinely sure that their 'one thin wire' would hurt them. But in fact the shooter's attitude held him back, and the weather was just his 'one thin wire'.

Do you have a 'thin wire' in your life? Is success just out of your grasp, on the other side of your 'thin wire'? Are you a prisoner of your attitude? Lots of people have 'thin wires' in their lives... and some people overcome them. Here are some of their antidotes and some of their stories.

**Thin Wire #1: "I can't shoot in the rain."**

**Antidote:** "I love shooting in the rain. I am prepared for the weather. I have a wet weather-shooting program. I can read the wind very easily when it's raining. It's a lot easier to build a lead when the conditions are tough."

**Story:** I really do love shooting in the rain. I have dozens of rain-shooting stories. But I approached an environmental 'thin wire' in my life when I was at the World Long Range Championships in South Africa in April 1999. There wasn't much rain, but there was a lot of sand. And in the wind, sand can be at least as troublesome as rain... it affects your shot, your equipment, and your attitude... if you let it.

All who were there would agree that the range was exceptionally windy. Very seasoned competitors came off the line looking shaken with low scores. I heard stories about shooting through sand, about how the sand could knock your bullet right out of the air! I really felt out-classed by the range and the conditions.

Then came the 'SandStorm Shoot'! We were firing from 800 meters. All finalists were firing concurrently in a 15-shot match. Since the wind was howling, the mirage was useless and the only way to keep up with it was to use the flags. After about 7 shots, I was clean... I hadn't dropped a

point. Then the wind really picked up and brought with it a whole lot of sand... the targets were obliterated, and just before the cease-fire was called, 12 of the target frames were snapped off by the wind. Twenty minutes later, the air had cleared, the target frames repaired, and while it was still very windy, the match resumed. I finished the rest of the match clean! In this game, when you shoot a perfect score, you have to have your trigger weighed... the officials had been so sure that there would be no perfect scores that day, they had not brought the trigger weight! I was well satisfied that I had beaten the conditions.

How did I do it? How could I, a relative newcomer, manage to outperform the best in the world in the toughest possible conditions?

I think it all revolved around one thing: I had set myself a performance goal, not an outcome-oriented goal! (I couldn't control outcome... I couldn't control the wind or the sand, and I couldn't control the other competitors... I could only control my own performance.) My official goal was as follows: "every shot I take will be completely subconscious" which indicates that I'm "in the bubble" or in the "ideal performance state" for every single shot... since the entire

series of matches comprised of about 900 shots, this was an ambitious (but do-able) goal.

There were a lot of times during the matches in South Africa when I just wanted to get the shot off... especially during the SandStorm Shoot, when conditions were changing rapidly and there was grit blowing in my face. But I had my goal, and I had made my goal public, and I could not allow myself to compromise this one thing that I could control. So for every shot during that sandstorm, I set my sights based on my best understanding of the flags and then I just fired the best possible shot that I could.

**Thin Wire #2: "I panic when it's really gusty because I'm not very good at reading the wind."**

**Antidote:** "I love shooting in the wind. I have practiced reading the flags and reading mirage. I know that every shot I take brings me more and better information that I can use in my next wind decision. It's a lot easier to build a lead when the conditions are tough."

**Story:** Keith also shot the World Long Range Championships in South Africa. Although an experienced fullbore shooter, he has not felt confident about shooting in windy conditions. He was truly intimidated with the

conditions on the General De Wet range at Bloemfontein. But we had made a pact with each other that these challenging conditions would not become our "one thin wire".

Keith had stated that his goal was to learn what it took to overcome the wind and do the best he could to beat this range. Of all the matches that we shot, this one is the one that he thinks of first when talking about the competitions in South Africa.

During his scoring duties and while waiting to shoot he would study the wind changes and look for the indicator that would most accurately tell of the changes in strength and direction. During this study time he decided that the direction was constant but the strength was changing. He picked a flag that was close to the firing line and where he could see its entire profile. As he settled into position and was waiting for the competitor ahead of him to finish his last few shots, he noticed that the tip of this flag now lined up nicely with power lines off in the distance. As he watched this he noticed that the tip of the flag spent more time above the power lines and occasionally dipped below them. The tip of the flag would spend about a minute below the power lines and then return to a position above the lines for about 3 or 4 minutes.

It is at this point in the story that his eyes twinkle and his smile broadens. It is at this point in the match that he has made a plan that might just beat this range and its tricky conditions. He would wait until the wind until the flag tip is above the distant power lines and then shoot as fast as he could - getting as many shots down range when the conditions were the same. Between each shot and as needed while in the aim he checked the position of the flag tip and fired or didn't, based on its position. He scored 99/100.

What happened to the one point you might ask? Well it seems he also had a question that was truly nagging him. Was this really working or was he just being lucky? So he fired one shot when the flag tip was below the power lines. It was a wide 9. He was in control of the conditions - on this day for those 10 shots he was in control. It was a tremendous feeling of victory not to be intimidated by the wind and to actually have fun in it. We came back from South Africa and spent a wonderful summer shooting our matches here in Canada. Neither of us is intimidated by the wind because we know that this "one thin wire" has no power in it.

*Next issue... the conclusion of One Thin Wire.*