

McCleery Golf Academy

Turning Weakness Into Strength

Balancing Habit and Compensation

None among us are perfect. Those that excel typically demonstrate strengths not common to the rest of us and in more areas. It is in becoming aware of and accepting our shortcomings that we can start to take aim and develop strength where there was once weakness.

Traditional teaching has centered on "compensation training" with the held belief that the brain is fixed, either it has ability or it doesn't what it lacked it would never achieve. We now know this premise to be false and are thus able to look at new effective solutions to overcoming "learning disability".

" Compensation training leads to certain abilities but because of it's compensatory nature also limits the capability of the golfer. It is in essence a trading off of some ability for acquisition of another ability.

Simply put, the golfer who wants to eliminate the slice, learns to hook the ball, but at the same time loses the ability to hit a controlled fade or slice when it is needed. Effective at first glance, limiting in terms of application on the golf course and overall skill development.

By" learning disability" in golf, I mean a swing change that despite years of trying hasn't manifested, I mean ones chronic slice or any other repetitive mistake that continues to plague the golfer.

The answers to the problem of how to build strength into a habit lie in the physiology of the brain itself.

It is accepted that certain areas of the brain undertake to control certain functions in all of us. However each of us has our own unique set of strengths and weaknesses in each area based on genetics and environment. Some may even lack certain areas of the brain and due to those weaknesses or "missing" areas certain tasks are more or less difficult or seemingly impossible. We now know through research and application through facilities such as Toronto's Arrowsmith School, that even those lacking physical areas of the brain can learn to do tasks typically associated with that missing part of the brain.

By exercising the brain, areas of the brain are in fact strengthened and cognitive and spatial abilities are developed in even the most "hopeless" cases.

How does this apply to your golf. Well, that chronic over the top move is not due to a lack of understanding, you've been told about it over and over, been presented with every common "golf" solution in the book, but you haven't learned. You have become so desperate at times you actually have given up any fear you might have had and still you slice the ball, you no longer care you just want to make the right move.

Assuming that your level of fitness and flexibility for golf is adequate you're just about out of places to look for answers.

All that's left is your spatial cognitive capacity to repeat a shape at will and that ability is manifest in a particular area of your brain that just might need some appropriate exercise. Interestingly enough the exercises are quite simple and once you make a habit of such exercise, useful habits evolve and weakness becomes strength and your game improves.

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