



Links Players

With a Little Luck

Teaching golf early in my career, I exposed my ignorance by giving each student as much information as possible to validate my expertise. I thought the more information given, the more logical an argument, and the more “why” a student should follow my advice, the more change would occur. Confucius was right, at least on this point. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Sometimes, it’s a misstep.

Today, with much experience, so many failures, and wisdom gained, I approach golf lessons differently. Repeated observations seared into my retinas taught me that learning golf and playing golf is an exercise in memory retrieval.

Golf swings are well-established patterns, signatures of a specific sort. As a teaching professional, I must decide whether to attempt the arduous effort to change a golfer’s pattern or restore the golfer’s good pattern as it exists within. Correction is a first step. Leading him to a good pattern becomes the lesson in retrieval.

Memory is an interesting subject, but let’s avoid the textbook. I encourage you to consider memory simply as dripping water onto a soft surface like clay. Over time, where water has dripped constantly, depression has formed deeper than when water has dripped less. The deeper hole has more memory. Habit likes the deeper hole. New habits require persistent dripping into the shallower hole.

And isn’t our faith life the same? How easy it is early in our journey to fall into the old habit. After all, this new life is like walking into a dark room. At first, we cannot see, but when our eyes adjust, we begin to see a little. And when the lights come on, all is clear and bright.

No Christian is perfected in an instant. As Jesus reminded us, the road is narrow and hard, but His yoke is easy. For me, this means turning to Him when I fall. It means the constant dripping of God’s word into my soul, listening in constant prayer, and inviting His presence to walk with me and I with Him. Daily, I must seek Him if I am to be perfected in His image.

My goal is simple. I want my deepest memory to overflow with His goodness and touch those I meet with the same. I want to reach for my habit and have it be Jesus’ habit. It’s hard. Failure waits. Too many old habits linger. But with every drip, I change.

I pray, “Lord, please don’t drip. Douse me. Make me yours.” I can go no further than the Master.

There are more steps in my future and more memories to form. My heart and mind are open to Him through prayer, devotion, solitude, and time in God's word. With a little luck, if God grants such a thing, I may get there. And if I do, let me remember and retrieve what His good hand has done.

Prayer: Father, remind us, "Those who have ears to hear, let them hear" (Matthew 11:15, NKJV).

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