

"There are only two ways to live your life, one is as though nothing is a miracle, and the other is as though everything is a miracle." Albert Einstein

Belief Before Proof: Throwing Really Is A Miracle

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Believing before 'doing' is of primary importance not only generally but specifically. It does require, however, an effective understanding of biomechanics, and learning by the coach and athlete and the rapport necessary for both to learn these in principle. In performing motor and psychological exercises, it can be effective to tell athletes to train muscle groups for the events and to 'tell' the groups 'what' they must do! Do not take the chance that somehow various body parts automatically follow the 'correct' technique without occasional direct intervention and cues. Have them imagine-think-visualize what the movement looks and feels like in the muscles BEFORE they do the movement as well as after. They do not need to understand this before they do it! Extra intellectual activity proximal to the throw can cause motor conflict. Many coaches have discovered this. Yogi Berra the great Yankee baseball catcher used this phenomenon to distract the hitters' performance by engaging them in conversation and it worked! "Keep your eye on the ball" can be a merit for other sports as well and we should add "stop thinking about it while you throw!"

You can hear the verbal commands in many sports which are derivatives of larger motor movement. In gymnastics the vaulter is sub verbalizing to 'stick the finish'. The metaphor is representative of a complex motor task. You can 'whack' the finish in the shot or tell your thighs to push 'down harder' as you squat. One a general metaphor cue, the other a specific cue to a body part.

Most of us want to analyze everything we must do but some or most of the things that will be done by us come before we understand it. Remember how it was when you first rode a bike? You wavered, fell and the next time without thinking you 'let' your body do the adjusting. Soon you were doing it automatically. The idea that understanding and 'knowing' intellectually comes before 'doing' and 'discovery' is a rather new phenomena historically. We can 'blame' it on rationalism. It is not an accident that many of the most famous and productive artists, musicians and scientists came at the dawn or before Rational thought kicked in. Blame it on Rene Descartes. Here are his Laws of the Cartesian Method:

- Accept nothing as true which is not clear and distinct;
- Analyze a problem into its parts and discuss it part by part;
- Arrange thoughts from simple to complex as the order of study;
- Enumerations must be full and complete and nothing must be omitted.

If we waited for all these to occur in throwing and other creative acts we would be back in the dark ages of sport! Scientists attempt to prove what cannot happen and when something 'happens' that they cannot explain but they can replicate it they call it discovery. They then analyze it to death to try to have its phenomena match what they already believe. A rare few (Einstein, Newton, Kepler) accepted what they could not further explain and 'it' became a law! Just 'Do it' and check the results after a reasonable amount of trials, modify the performance then do it again. The 'ahah! comes AFTER you stub your toe....not before!

Good practices in personal life and beliefs will protect you from harm. Use the Cartesian method to examine what you have done after you have done it and away from the field of play. Effective science and discovery lead to good practice efforts from observation of what works before understanding. As long as we leave a little pinch of curiosity and wonder for what we do the 'new' discoveries will come. 'Ahahs' have there own agenda we have ours. Let us leave little openings in our 'agenda's for the 'Ahah's' to peak through.