



KAGAMI ARTICLE OCTOBER 2009

ROOT CAUSE OR SYMPTOM?

Consistency – this must be every golfer’s dream – to be able to regularly achieve the potential you know is in you!

One of the most frustrating things for a golfer is to not know WHY they are playing so badly – or for that matter HOW to repeat the good shots!

Feeling that you are at the mercy of some outside force or circumstance as to whether your golf game is brilliant, mediocre or awful on any given day, is one of the most frustrating experiences for any golfer.

My role as a Kagami golf coach is to help my clients become independent of me, which requires raised levels of awareness, understanding of the physics of the game and the ability to ask good quality questions.

Only then will you get to the root cause of HOW and WHY you are playing brilliantly or atrociously on any give day - and consequently be able to help yourself to play more consistent golf.

A brilliant golf shot might be an exciting demonstration of your talent, but it’s really only useful if you know how to repeat it – if you can map your “system for success”. In the same way a terrible golf shot can cause a serious self-confidence dip if you have no idea what you did or how to correct it. However if you are able to find the root cause of your mistake, and correct it on the next shot, your self-confidence level will not be affected.

Looking Past the Technical Change – Body Follows Mind

Yes of course your golf swing changed – but WHY??? Many golfers seem to think that their technique changes all by itself – what nonsense... That’s simply not possible, because the body follows the mind. There has to have been some kind of mental interference for your body to suddenly make a completely different movement than your usual swing.

If you can discover what that interference was, you are half way to becoming independent and consistent on the golf course. The second part of the equation is finding a way to reduce the mental interference during your swing.

That’s where most people need some support, once you know what to do to change your mental state, and therefore the physical reaction, you have a “system for success” that is repeatable.

Even if you have NEVER been able to play a particular shot well, the root cause is often still in the brain, while the cerebellum and muscles in the meantime have grooved a movement that’s producing rather unsatisfactory results!!



The Cerebellum - for those of you who have not been on a Kagami Workshop - is the area of the brain responsible for motor co-ordination.

Thomas the Slicer

Let's take Thomas the Slicer as an example. I'm sure most of you know such a golfer? Thomas slices the ball every time he hits it - even on his practice swing he makes a slice swing, and the more he tries to compensate with his lining up, the more extreme his slice becomes. He certainly has a physically conditioned movement that he has worked hard to ensure stays in his Cerebellum. Of course the "virus" needs to be removed and a new more effective programme loaded into the Cerebellum, which can be done with Kagami exercises, but that's not enough. We also have to find the root cause both physically and mentally of this slice otherwise Thomas will be in danger of falling back into the same habit in a few weeks.

The physical cause could be at the beginning of the backswing, because Thomas is lifting the club with his right hand and arm (he is playing right handed.) This causes tension in his right shoulder at the end of the backswing and the incorrect swing plan of the club. The rest is automatic – an outside to inside swing with the club head open and away the ball goes into the bushes on the right...! Another frustrated golfer...

Assuming this diagnosis, then the best Kagami exercise is "Hozen Tashen Ziehen" "Pulling Trousers Pocket"! This is explained fully with pictures in my book on page 62. Every Kagami exercise runs on 2 parallel tracks, affecting both the physical swing of the golfer as well as improving the mental state, by bringing the golfer back into now and activating the Cerebellum – that part of the brain that actually *can* communicate with the body effectively.

Searching for the Root Cause

The next question is WHY Thomas is lifting the club with his right hand and arm? This now requires good quality questions. Perhaps Thomas has the erroneous belief that it's necessary to lift the club to bring it back, or maybe he is preparing to "kill" the ball with as much strength as he can muster because he falsely believes that strength is the key to hitting the ball a long way, or it could be that his right arm is already tense and ready to help out in the swing at the address position because he feels rather insecure and nervous about losing another golf ball in the woods! Only Thomas knows the answer, and my job as a Coach is to support him in finding out what the root cause is of his slice swing.

Once we have shone a light on the belief or attitude that is causing Thomas's slice swing, and it becomes obvious that his belief is simply not true, it's easy for Thomas to make better choices and decisions for himself.



An Holistic Answer

This change in core attitude or belief, along with the correct Kagami exercise that automatically creates the swing change we are looking for (without instructions of course) has to have a profound effect on Thomas's swing. Not only will they help Thomas activate the most effective parts of his brain for a fine motor co-ordinated movement such as golf – the right brain and Cerebellum - they also have the effect of quieting the negative chatter in his intellect that has been causing tension and anxiety. Thomas has intellectual understanding about the physics of his swing, he knows what the correct swing feels like, has a new more effective core belief about his swing, and has a Kagami exercise that helps him repeat the desired movement and quieten his intellectual mind during the swing. We have covered all bases from a scientific, physiological and psychological perspective.

At this point I often observe a quantum leap in performance with my clients.

Now all that's left is for Thomas to practice his new swing and mental discipline so that he regains confidence in his ability to hit the ball straight. Then consistency and self-confidence are Thomas's reward.

The moral in this story is – if you are satisfied with working on the symptom rather than the taking the time to discover the root cause of miss-hit shots, you are wasting your time and energy – in fact you might find yourself on a downward performance spiral.

Finding the root cause of any limiting behaviour is fundamental to affecting long term behavioural change – and that's true for your "life swing" and "work swing" as well...!

Happy swinging in the Zone

Sabana Crowcroft
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