



(a subsidiary of TRUE NORTH CURLING INC.)

PRESENTS THE COACHING SERIES...

“A PANE IN THE GLASS”

Rocks, Pebbles and Sand

One of the most challenging aspects of performance, on the ice, at school, in the workplace or wherever, is to put yourself into a mental state to allow you to do what you know you can do.

Prior to a competition, I encourage well prepared athletes to focus on those aspects of their lives which have relevance to their mental well being. Deal with the life issues.

This short essay is about that subject. It may be the most important one of the series. I don't know the name of the author but I do wish to acknowledge my late friend Brent Dysart from Kitchener, Ontario who brought it to my attention.

In a recent essay in the series, I mentioned that every athlete has two “selves”. One is the performer self and one the real self. As coaches, we see the performer self almost exclusively but each athlete has a real self because in addition to being an athlete, they may be a spouse, a sibling, an employee, a coach themselves in some sport other than curling... The list can be long. For the performer self to perform, the real self must deal with those everyday items that when accomplished, allow the athlete to perform!

*Before a team under my tutelage goes onto the ice for a game, I say the same three things. **“Hit the brush. Deliver the right weight. Play very carefully without last stone advantage.”** In other words, it's not a complicated game so play it that way. Keep it simple and concentrate on what really matters.*

Enjoy “Rocks, Pebbles and Sand” and I'll see you soon behind “A Pane in the Glass”!

Bill Tschirhart

A philosophy professor stood before his class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks, rocks of about 5 cm. in diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook it lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open spaces among the rocks. The students laughed.

Lastly, the professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled everything else.

"Now," said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this is your life."

"The rocks are the important things - your family, your partner, and your health - anything that is so important to you that if lost, you would be nearly destroyed. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else. The small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles and the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your wife out dancing. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and repair the disposal."

"Take care of the rocks first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities."

"The rest is just sand!"