

## Fixing the Economy Between Your Ears: 6 Inches Between You and Success

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Arnold Palmer, one of the greatest golfers of all time, is quoted as saying, "Golf is a game of inches. The most important are the six inches between your ears." In both golf and your practice, it's not so much what happens as how you *respond* to what happens that makes the difference. In a universe filled with unlimited opportunities and where things can change in an instant, unpredictable and sometimes unpleasant things occur.

### "Catch" Your First Impulse

Learning to control your impulses when confronted by a potentially negative situation is the first step to fixing the economy between your ears. It's important to control your impulses so that they do not control you. A disgruntled patient, underperforming practice team member, or underpaying insurance company can set the best of us off. When confronted by a challenging circumstance, your first impulse might be to lose control, blow off steam and vent your anger. While blowing off steam may provide you with a momentary sense of relief, nothing is fixed when you fail to control your impulses. A response of hurt, fear, anger, frustration or rage can blind you to the more positive alternatives available to you. Anger alone can provoke anger in others and prevent solutions.

You can't control everything, but you can control how you respond to things. Impose discipline on your impulses. Take a deep breath, suck in your stomach and tense your abdominal muscles. Be still for an instant and remember that you are in control - right here and right now. Build an inner control switch that you can turn on and off at will. Whatever is occurring may not be your fault, but how you respond is your responsibility.



### An Inspirational Story

One day a farmer's donkey fell into a well. The animal brayed piteously for hours as the farmer figured out what to do. Finally, he decided the donkey was old, the well needed to be filled in, and that it just wasn't worth the effort to retrieve him. The farmer grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. When the donkey first realized what was happening, he cried horribly. Then, he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, when the farmer finally looked down the well, he was astonished at what he saw. With every shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey had shaken it off and taken a step up. As the farmer continued to shovel dirt on top of him, he would shake it off and take another step up. Soon the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off.

The moral of the story is that at various times, life is going to shovel dirt on you - all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take that first step up. Each of our troubles is a stepping stone. We can get out of the deepest wells by never giving up. Shake it off and take a step upward!

### The Chocolate Chip Cookie System

Every cook has their favorite recipes. I have an excellent recipe for chocolate chip cookies. When I combine all of the ingredients in the correct proportion and order, and then bake them for just the right amount of time, I end up with perfect cookies every time. Every outcome is the result of a perfectly designed system for achieving that outcome. To have a great practice and a great life, it's

important to put together the right ingredients.

I know a chiropractor who has a system that produces consistently great results for her. She smiles a lot. She's appreciative and tells people how grateful she is. She's interested in the people she meets, wants to know about their lives, and finds out information in an innocent way without seeming nosy or intrusive. She compliments others on their achievements. She says "thank you" and lets people know they are worthy of praise and respect. In return, she's one of those people you meet in life who you make an instant connection with and for who you'd do anything in your power to help them achieve their goals.

### Practice Makes Perfect

A recipe means nothing until you bake the cookies. To learn how to do anything well, you have to practice. To learn how to control your mind, and how you respond to the situations life sends your way, you must practice. Designing the right system for you and living by it takes practice. It will help prepare you to stay on course whenever something happens to pull you off purpose.

You can prepare for the challenges of life by acknowledging that you live in a universe of unlimited possibilities. This means you are subject to the impact of any and all possibilities - good and bad. Acknowledge that no problem is bigger than you are and that you have all you need to meet any challenge. Realize that you can handle any situation life places in your path. It's just a question of balance.

### Be What You Want to See

Keep in mind that in changing your life, the magic is you. The control is inside of you. Know the role you must play in making things better, and then act the part. When you act the part, you become the part. Act like the people you want to be like. Look for people who are producing the outcomes you'd like to have in your life and mimic their behavior. Act positive and you will become positive. A positive attitude begins between your ears. Adopt a new mantra for your life: *It's not what happens to me that's important - it's how I respond to what happens that matters.*

No one likes to be around a person with a bad attitude. When people detect a positive attitude they tend to move in your direction. People may forget what you said. They may forget what you did. But people will never forget how you make them feel. No challenge has ever been met, no change ever adapted to, and no success achieved without a positive attitude.

### Take Control of Your Life

Take a moment to complete the following exercise. Make a list of the most dependable, responsible people you know. People you know personally, people you can count on to be fair, trustworthy, honest, civil and considerate. People who know the rules of the game, work hard and know the principles of what is good, right and decent. If all the people on your list were to make their own list, would you be on it? If not, the power to change is within you.

Of all the gifts you possess, the greatest gift of all is your mind. Your mind will enable you to meet challenges, solve problems and take advantage of opportunities. How you deal with the things that happen in your life depends solely on how you live your life every day. In life there are some things you can always count on. You can count on change. Change is a feature of growth.

### To Win It, You Have to Begin It

When you were a toddler, you discovered gravity. You learned that you couldn't walk without

falling down. The longer you stood balanced on one leg, the more unprotected you were. You learned that you had to make your move sooner and not later. To get from point A to point B, you had to take that first step. That's how life continues to work. If you are going to make a change in your life, stop all the indecision and teetering and take that first step.

In the game of life, there is no guarantee on time. Have you ever known someone who did not live to be 35 years old? The alternative to something difficult happening is nothing happening at all. Everything you have is all a part of life's gift. Life is joy interspersed with highs and lows, miracles and tragedies, holding on and letting go, ebb and flow. Act as if life is a gift and watch what happens. Be grateful for what you have and remember that life gets better as *you* get better.

JULY 2011