



Orindawoods Tennis News

March 2023

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"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it" – Celia, As You Like It, Act II, Scene IV

March 2023 to March 2024

Ball Machine Club Renewal

March is the month that we renew our Ball Machine Club Memberships. For \$110 annually, you can use the ball machine an unlimited amount, when the court is available (and not soaking wet, like it is when I write this). The Ball Machine Club runs March 2023 to March 2024 and includes a key to the shed so that you can play at times when the shed is locked, and the pros are away. If you have never done the Ball Machine Club before, but fancy working on your game in 2023, and getting some great exercise at the same time, consider registering. Talk to Keith or Erik for more information. Payment is by credit card, \$110 for the entire year. Pro-rated later.

You can also rent the ball machine for \$8 / hour, if you would like to occasionally use the machine to practice, but not commit to an entire year. You will be limited to times when the shed is open.

Please remember that ball machine reservations are only for an hour, you reserve Court 3 (that includes the ball machine). Please delete your reservations if you are not going to use it. Someone else would love, would pine for, your spot.

Keith's Tennis Travel and Vacation

ETD Keith Wheeler will be away from Orindawoods **March 3 to March 14**. The first three days Keith will be attending the USTA Annual Meeting in Phoenix, AZ to learn the latest information about how the USTA is growing and managing tennis in the United States.

Of course, one of the main topics will be **pickleball**, which is a great game, I love to play, and complimentary to tennis, unless it starts to "steal" tennis courts. We, as a society, should be building stand-alone pickleball facilities. However, it's much cheaper to convert a tennis court (a few thousand dollars to repaint) than to build a new pad and put pickleball courts on it (\$50,000 plus any grading work that needs to be done), so the temptation to co-opt tennis courts is strong among passionate pickleball enthusiasts. It's short-term monetary sense. USTA is committed to a world where both games can be successful and thrive (and often played by the same people). This is long-term view for the entire community.

Pickleball is just one of many issues out there. It is common knowledge that pickleball is growing as a sport, but few know that tennis continues to grow as a sport, as well. And there are more than four times the number of people that play tennis, compared to pickleball. We strive to have both here at Orindawoods.

Canceled Clinics: After Phoenix, Keith will be skiing in Whistler for a week. There will be **no Men's Clinics (3/9) and Women's Clinics (3/7)** that week, and **no H&F on Friday 3/3 or Wednesday 3/8**. There will be H&F on Friday 3/10 (Cindy will teach). I hope everyone has a great week! Thank you!

Spring Junior Program

Erik's Orindawoods Spring Junior Tennis Program is in full swing, Monday through Thursday afternoons at the Club on courts 4-7. It

2023 Club Rates

Tennis Lessons with Keith & Erik:

½ hour private \$50
1 hour private \$85

Semi-pvt (2) \$55ea
Semi-pvt (3) \$37ea
Semi-pvt (4) \$28ea
45 min pvt \$65
1.5-hour pvt \$125

Non-members add \$5

Club Dues: \$147 / month

Guests: \$10 (1 visit / week). Pay Station located by the Pro Shop door.

Weekly Lessons

Ladies' clinic: Tues 9:30 \$10
Men's clinics: Thurs 9:30 \$10

Hit and Fit

Wednesday 11:30-1 1.5 hours

Friday 11:30-1 1.5 hours

The cost is \$20 / class for tennis and TRX

Ball Machine

Ball Machine Club \$110 /year
Ball Machine / hour \$8

- Ball Machine Club runs thru 3/30/24
- Reserve Court 3 to use the machine.
- Reservations are for **1 hour**.
- Pay using Pay Station / credit card
- iPhone app: **Like My Drill**

Racquet Stringing by Patric Hermanson.

Patric is continuing in his fine tradition of being our expert racquet stringer. Patric picks up and drops off racquets early on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Put some zip back your game, get a restring!

Twain Quotes of the Month:

"I've been through some horrible things in my life, and some of them actually happened." – Mark Twain

"You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus."

– Mark Twain.

is great to see so many kids out on the courts learning the wonderful game of tennis.

Erik is in the process of creating the schedule for the Summer Program, which will be announced later this month.

Orindawoods Summer Tennis Socials

- 1) **Monday Team Tennis** will start in early May, with signups in April (look for registration next month).
 - 2) **Socials.** We are starting to plan our upcoming social events for 2023. The dates are dependent on how long this rain and winter is going to stick with us. Look for announcements in April. "April showers bring May flowers..."
 - 3) **Pool Scene.** We are going to be doing some major work on the pool, replacing the heaters and filter, and plan to open in early May, if possible. It was time for an upgrade on our aging equipment. OW is doing that work!
 - 4) **Court Repairs.** We are putting together a plan to work on the courts. More details to follow.
 - 5) **Orindawoods is Fifty!** Yes, our wonderful neighborhood and club is 50 years old. There are celebrations planned!
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Orindawoods Tennis Club

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Tennis Tip:

The Oreo Test

There is an Oreo Test, that goes something like this:

"I'll give you one Oreo now, or if instead, you wait 20 minutes, I will give you two Oreos."

It is often used to test kids (or big "kids") to see if they understand and can master the trait of delayed gratification. Can you save, or invest for the future?

In the context that I have been studying it, my upbringing, and our culture, it seemed "obvious" (the "smart" thing to do — "the smart kids") that you should wait 20 minutes and get two Oreos. "Dah." In fact, it was assumed you would / should do that, unless you have some "issue" (fault / flaw/ weakness) where you can't seem to do what everyone with any sense would do, wait for the second Oreo, and double the payout. (All language here intentionally fully loaded because that is how I "heard" it). All based on my "straight-A student", good member of American culture, reading of the whole thing.

But recently, for some reason (call it a dawning wisdom), I began to question my "reading" or "training" on the subject. Not that my waiting for two Oreos was wrong, just that maybe, it is not always the best thing to do. Or that simple.

I mean, I have a very dear friend that says, "Life is short, eat dessert first." Yeah, it's funny, even tasty, with some guilty pleasure wrapped in, but there seems to be some wisdom to this point of view as well. Not to mention the Credence song titled, "Someday Never Comes."

So perhaps my long-accepted and totally-unquestioned "correct answer," is just a point of view, after all.

One of my students is in finance, and I talked to her about it a bit, and she offered that it really depends on the circumstances. Sure, if you can wait around and invest, doubling your income is great, but sometimes we need the cash right now, need to replace a totaled car, or a leaking roof, and "so what" if you can buy two cars later, you need one car now, to make the income to even think about a second car later. Saving, or having money in the bank, is not always the best answer. Maybe the rainy day is already here.

Interesting.

Sad Story. I had a friend, who was determined to make a fortune, and retire by the time he was 35. He worked hard, all the time, did very well, well on his way, and went out to Santa Cruz one weekend to watch the huge waves from a winter storm, and was swept off the rocks and killed, before his 35th birthday.

Twice I could have died in serious car accidents. So even an idea that seems like a "no brainer" in some contexts, might require further examination.

And of course, there is the sign posted behind many a bar that simply reads, "Free Beer Tomorrow."

So, when do we delay gratification, when do we not?

Situational. Like most choices, they are situational, and not a matter of one correct answer for all time. Most wisdom is unique to the moment and not in the form of a saying, or funny quiz about "Two Oreos." We need to know who we are, understand the situation, examine our inner wisdom, and make the best choice possible for right now, neither giving into all our desires, or always delaying our rewards.

Same idea for choosing what shot to hit. How the ball comes, where my opponent is, the sun, the wind, my skills, my internal mental emotional state at the time, all come into play to be successful. Making a tough shot at 1-1 is a lot easier than 4-5, 30-40 in the third set. Different times, different answers. Situational.

A wise man once gave me some sage advice, saying the key to life was to live appropriately. Annoyingly true, we must live in each moment, and we can't count on some preset answer being the right answer all the time. We must figure it out now. And we might even make a mistake. Imagine that. But at least the Oreos are tasty, even if you only get one. Plus, if you only have one, you don't gain as much weight. More isn't better, better is better. Better changes.

Tennis Tip:

Depth of Field

Dimensions. We live in a three-dimensional world, plus time. The time / space continuum. Four dimensions, a bit complicated to think about, understand, comprehend, control, and respond to all the events happening in time and space. So, we simplify our thinking, our strokes, to just a couple of these (and many teachers simplify their teaching, as well). We make it easier to understand, to get a grasp on. Get it all down to a "size" we can understand.

The problem is, this isn't reality. Life is complicated, or detailed. We can leave out really important information. Players often think about the height of the ball, or the width, the distance away from them it is to the side. But the ball is primarily moving in the depth dimension, going from our opponent, across the net, to us. Of course, how fast, how soon, how deep, varies every single shot. Trying to connect with this moving and ever-changing ball is what most people refer to as timing (more on that below).

It is easier to think about height or width, where our desires don't really change that much. The trouble is, we must deal with the changing depth all the time, and that is very related to timing the shot. If we focused on where we make contact in the depth field, that also helps us to solve the timing problem, where thinking about the height ("I like the ball low" is the most common) doesn't help us with the depth, timing, or width at all. If within this depth field (how far in front I want the ball), I also include the width (get behind the ball — see December 2022 newsletter), the height just becomes the height when it gets to me. Not the huge deal most players tend to make the issue of height.

"Depth of Field" is a term from photography that means how far away from you the lens of the camera is focused. For a close up, we focus in close, and what is behind the person in the picture, is blurry, or out of focus.

If we set our eye's focus on the distance in front of us, where we want to make contact, and make that the primary concern, we let the ball come to our point of focus, or concentration, interesting things start to happen. Obviously, we start to contact the ball at the proper depth, and timing is simplified. But, our world view changes as well.

Arrival. A few years ago, there was a film by Denis Villeneuve called *Arrival*, where a linguist professor (played by Amy Adams) is called in to interact with aliens and learn to communicate with them by learning their language. The thing is, that their language spanned all time, and not just focused on either the past, the present, or the future. Their language was "timeless." They see, think and talk about everything. So, as she became fluent, it changed her mind, the way her brain worked, the way she thought, the way she dreamed, and the way she could see. She began to see all the events of her life, even the ones that had not happened yet. This "superpower" allowed her to actually save humanity (spoiler alert - sorry), by stopping humans from making a huge mistake in how to deal with the "alien invaders".

Our Vision. Ok, this gets a bit trippy, but indulge me. Tennis pro Scott Ford has done a lot of research working with optometrists and understanding the way the eye works. What he discovered, was it becomes an advantage to focus on the depth, and specifically the depth of field (where I want contact to be) rather than the "current" depth of the ball (how far away it is from you). Even if the focal point is 2 feet in front of you, and the ball is blurry green thing on the other side of the net, moving somewhat towards you, your eye and brain still "see" it. Surprisingly, you still get the necessary information to make contact when it comes to you. Even if it is out of focus. Crazy but true. Try it out.

The ball comes into focus as it arrives at the depth of field you have set your eyes to be in focus. In other words, an object doesn't have to be in focus for you to see it. But you see it clearly at contact when it is usually a blur when you are constantly trying to adjust your depth of field as it races towards you. Always a bit behind. And of course, it "looks" a lot faster the closer to you it gets (even though, pulled by gravity and fighting air resistance, it is actually slowing down).

More proof? If you are looking at me, and someone standing to your side tosses a ball at you, you will "suddenly" see it and react. The truth is, you saw it all along, in fact, everything in your eye's field of vision, you just were not focused on it. This has important ramifications for "seeing" what your opponent is doing, even if you are not "watching" them ("keep your eye on the ball"). Your mind, your "intuition" takes it all in. You "know" they are poaching.

If you traditionally "watch the ball," you see the ball is moving towards you, and what you are seeing, by the time your brain sees it, analysis it, and tells your body to intercept it, is where it was, i.e., the past. Not the present. The ball is much closer to you now, even fractions of a second later. If instead I focus on where the ball is going, the contact point, I'm looking at the future. Where contact will be. Somehow this act of "looking ahead" can give me some premonitions about what I might want to do. And we tend to reach a calm, clear state, taking appropriate energy.

Psychologically, we are waiting for the ball. We're not chasing it or trying to catch up to it with our focus. In this calm state, we can find the zone. (See below, "Balance" article)

Maybe that is a bit far out there for you. Or it is physically tough to focus on the contact point (Hey, we have been looking at the past our whole lives, we're used to it and call it present reality). Fair enough. Simply intending to make contact at the proper depth each time (ie. good timing), and not worrying so much about height or width, will help your game a great deal because you are primarily focused on at least two of the variables, depth, and time, and not just one, height or width.

Dealing in the depth dimension includes timing, and that is a far better place to focus your attention, rather than dreaming, wishing, and fishing that the ball is the right height or width. Once you establish the contact depth, as a frame of reference, and timing is basically problem solved, it is much easier to get the width and height right. In that order. Get behind the ball before you worry about how high it is. Might be a good idea to try this out in a short court rally when you are warming up, or on the ball machine, but give "depth of field" a try.

Tennis Tip:

Balance

Tennis and life involve a balance for true, ultimate performance. Energy comes towards us (in the form of a ball played by our opponent) and we must gather that energy, transform it, and send it back to the other side of the net. This involves receiving that energy (the ball), slowing it down (it's "forward" movement towards you) to a stop, and then sending it back (forward movement towards your opponent). And this transformation, from receiving to sending, must happen in what seems like an instant. We have the help of the racquet, which is a hand-held trampoline, within a frame that also flexes (receives) and springs back (sends) as a response to the incoming ball meeting the strings (hopefully :-)).

This is the yin and yang of tennis, the female, and the male (not gender, but life energy) that the complete player must have. And we all do, we all send and receive when we play tennis. The question is, are these energies in balance? For to be a master of the sport, we must have both energies, and know when and how to transition from one to the other.

This is one of the keys of life, for we receive (take an in-breath) and exhale (release an out-breath) to even survive. Our heart beats, and then rests, beats, and then rests. We take in information from the outside world, and then respond, give back, our contribution. A teacher gives information, and the student receives information. In a meaningful conversation with a friend or partner, we talk, and then we listen (hopefully). When it is all one way, two people sending, or two people receiving, nothing happens, there is no connection. No conversation.

Often, we moan about change, but I can't imagine anyone wanting their EKG to register as a consistent, flat line. Life is change, and the balance of opposites.

The question is really about efficiency, how well we do this, do we get the balance between the two, and the timing of the interaction.

In tennis, players are often labeled "offensive" or "defensive", some focus on power, others on consistency. There are "big hitters", and there are "pushers." And we judge, we give what is arbitrary values to one quality being "better" than the other. Our society, Western culture, has emphasized very male (yang) values for a very long time. I don't mean dominated by men (though that could be often true) but dominated by the values of sending, offense, attacking, conflict, controlling, separation, domination as if those ideas were somehow more important, or "better," than receiving, or female (yin) qualities (observing, listening, intuiting, loving).

"Male" and "Female" Labels are really loaded here. Think of it more in the tennis analogy, sending and receiving. There is a huge emphasis on sending, on winners, on forcing errors, on taking charge. Winning the match. And yet, I don't know where you came from, but in my hometown club, the pushers had most of the trophies. What does that say? And the biggest pusher of them all, Bob the Lob, was very masculine. He loved winning, but he found a receiving way to do it. Catch the ball, send it back softly. And he dominated (again, a "male" trait), made mincemeat of the "big hitters" (made them "cry" in the playground version of shame and domination), until he played someone with more balance. Someone who had better skills, the ability to receive first, and to send (not just get it back, but to attack, but appropriately, and not blindly, like the "big hitters,"). Then, in typical male fashion (again, I don't mean men, I mean the male /yang trait), if he couldn't win, he quit playing those people (did everything he could to "stay a 4.0" instead of being bumped up to his true level where he could lose). Ultimately, he quit tennis. This is someone who mastered so much of the key strategic components of tennis, but in the end, failed, by being out of balance.

Winning and Losing. My doubles partner in college said, "You can't win, until you learn how to lose." In other words, you can't unleash your potential if you are afraid that you might have setbacks, pain, and disappointments on the way to fulfillment (or a better forehand). You can't play your best if you don't risk missing. Accept missing.

So, balance. As Ecclesiastes says, "there is a time to weep and a time to laugh" and in tennis, there is time for receiving, and a time for sending. And a balance between the two. No right answers all the time (See "The Oreo Test"). The three key components of playing a ball are coordination (finding the ball), aiming, and sending. Coordination is essentially receiving (catching, making contact), aiming has elements of both receiving, and sending, for it is how you

meet the ball (receiving), but also where you plan to place it (sending). And there is sending, releasing energy. Most players tend to focus on the sending, or worse, the winning, and tend to forget that you must catch, receive, coordinate with the ball first, and aim, before you can “throw” it back.

Hitting. The “hitting” model, a word I try not to use, is a bad model for playing tennis. Much better to think of tennis as catch and throw. Therefore, lacrosse players learn tennis much faster than most “normal” people because they understand the catch, and the throw. In fact, most of the time, in most points, an elite player is not trying to beat the opponent, or hit a winner, but play it back, until you get an opportunity to be more offensive. You are playing catch with them. A focus on “hitting winners” leads to making a lot of errors. Too many to win. But you will “win” that “shot of the day,” the mythical “trophy” pursued by many. The macho award of hitting the best shot!

Having focus, staying in the moment, means facilitating this exchange, receiving when you are in the receiving phase, and sending when you are in the sending phase. Think of most of the popular, effective, “all-time greatest” tennis tips, they are about receiving: Watch the ball, move your feet, soft hands, get in position, keep your head down... and on and on. This is not because they are “more important,” than the sending tips (follow through, release the ball, accelerate at contact...) it is because they are the ones we tend to forget when they think about “hitting” or sending the ball. Receive first, then send.

“But hitting is the fun part!” Yeah..., if you receive first. Don’t worry, if you focus on receiving, you won’t forget to make contact, or to send it back. And have fun in the process! In fact, great receiving is crucial to great sending.

I Don’t Just Hit It? How to catch and throw when playing a tennis ball is challenging, and not the focus of this article, though I have written about it many times before, but for now, remember that you are both a receiver and a sender, that there is a balance between the two, and life does not exist well, without both the male and the female qualities. We want to cultivate both sides of our inner selves. Often, just thinking of “carrying the ball,” rather than “hitting,” gets the job done.

The Mental Game. Finally, consider this for the mental game. We all hate being nervous, choking, massively underperforming, etc. And we love zoning, playing out of our minds, achieving the ideal performance state. Those are opposites, and we tend to desire the latter, and try to avoid the former. At all costs!!!

But what about this: I want you to think about anything but a pink elephant.

Of course, the thing you are trying to avoid is exactly what you think about first, a pink elephant. So now what? I don’t want to choke, and before a match, in my heart of hearts, it very well might be all I can think about. “Don’t f--- up!” How do we not choke?

Balance Exercise. Try this exercise. Pick any emotion or situation. Then choose its opposite. Visualize the first for 3 minutes. Really think, feel, believe it, embody it. Then do the same for 3 minutes with the opposite.

For example, really try to experience choking in your mind’s eye. The memories, feelings, fears, the whole flippin’ disaster. Worst tennis experience. 3 minutes.

Then visualize zoning, the amazing feeling, the “can’t miss moments”, the way you fantasize about playing. Live it again in your memory. Again 3 minutes. Best tennis experience.

So, you know how you feel when things are their worst, and you know how you feel when things are their best. And your memories and imagination can create both in your mind, and body, right now. You actually feel what you felt at that time. It is real.

Step 3: feel both at the same time. We can have this mental, physical, emotional awareness in our minds and bodies of choking and zoning at the same time. They are both real, they both exist. Three minutes, feel both. And then choose. Make a choice, rather than fear, try to avoid and run away. That will just make you fixate on the bad.

I remember hearing Borg talk one time about nerves and being labeled “The Ice Man.” He was so cool under pressure. “I get nervous like everyone else; I just choose not to focus on it.” And for all these years I thought, “Yeah great, duh, but how do you do that?” This is how. Balance, accept both, accept it all (for there are far more than two options or dualities). Now, it isn’t scary, you are not hiding, everything is out in the open, in the light of day (yang), the dark of night (yin), and you can choose. Choose your focus.

Tennis Tip:

What About Luck?

My student played a great shot, an inside out backhand, that would be a clean winner in any game of tennis you every play. Not only that, but their form was perfect, a waiting, coiling energy, a receiving the ball, and the release energy that made the ball act like it had come out of a cannon. (See “Balance” above). The kind of shot that we all want to play, dream to play, but seldom can do. They really let go, and “just did it right.” I said something like, “Wow, that’s what we’re chasing, what we’re looking for!!!! Your best shot of the day!”

They laughed, and said, “Yeah, that was lucky. I didn’t mean to hit it there.”

Of course, we all do, and feel this “accidental winner”. We have these wonder moments, and immediately feel “that isn’t us,” not what I normally do. I was lucky. Or we pray for luck, “let me win the lottery,” or “get this serve in.”

Fair enough, that wonder shot was not our intention. At least consciously (another discussion there). But what are we really saying? What is the story we are feeding ourselves, and others? (Hint: BS).

A few moments later, that same student mis-timed a shot, adjusted in a way that was not helpful for making the shot, and dumped the ball in the bottom of the net. There was some comment about, “my backhand sucks” that followed, half out loud, half under their breath. Something they would confess to me, their teacher, but not want to say to their friends or opponents. Which, if we think about it (perhaps later, but a larger discussion), isn’t that far from “I suck as a tennis player,” which is closely related to “I suck” as a person. Because you missed one backhand? Or even a series of backhands? Or even every backhand. Again, a bigger discussion.

But what I think is fascinating here, is that if I hit a great shot, it is luck, but if I miss a shot, “I suck.” Hmmmm, I don’t get credit for the good things I do, it is just random luck, “act of god”, whatever, I don’t get the credit, but it is my fault for my mistakes. “I need to take responsibility for my errors.” AND, we buy this story line!?!?! It is hard enough to beat your opponent, but we must also overcome our own nonsense too.

As a teenager learning the game at an elite level, this was the mental / emotional reality that I found myself in, the rules my upbringing somehow placed on me, the culture of high performance, of winning. And it is extremely negative, the dice loaded against me, against happiness, against enjoyment, against fulfillment.

Now I look back at those years, and I was upset all the time, notorious for outburst on the court. Temper tantrums. But really, how do you even have a chance to be happy, to enjoy your tennis, if it is your fault when you make a mistake, and you are just lucky when you hit a shot that is above your usual level.

Add to this, that when you make a “normal” shot, that is just what you are supposed to do (no credit for “doing it right”, no smile, no pat on the back), if you miss it, it is an unforced error (tennis speak for “you suck”). And I’m lucky when I’m brilliant. And it’s all my fault when I miss.

Now maybe that life outlook drives one to try to get better, never being good enough (“don’t get rid of poverty, too many great things come from it” — Robert Frost), but it certainly doesn’t lead to happiness, and enjoyment of tennis, life (yeah, did this in school too), relationships (oh boy, lots of “sorrys” owned there), everything.

The opening, or the way out of this, came in the form of the realization (so obvious, but clearly — ha ha — “unseen”) that **the ball goes where you hit it. EVERY SINGLE TIME.** Even that ball that goes off the top of your frame and backwards over the fence behind you, and miraculously lands in the trash can behind the court. You hit it there.

True, you may not have intended what happened, but that is where you hit it. This life-freeing realization started out with if I’m taking responsibility for my errors, I should take credit for my “winners,” or successes. But it went much farther than that, to a lifelong study of sports psychology and spirituality. There are “body” or “subconscious” intentions (“self 2” in Tim Galloway’s *Inner Game of Tennis*) that drive us much more than our conscious ones. Who is to say that shot wasn’t planned? Just not consciously. And as I learned more and more to get in that magical state of the zone, and play from there, I realized that when I was great (lucky???), I wasn’t picking my shots consciously at all. I was intentionally letting go of conscious control, getting out of my own way!!!! This was the goal, in a sense, irresponsibility, in the twisted way I had been taught responsibility.

In fact, my mind, or ego, would watch me hit a shot, and says something like, “That will never work, it’s right to my opponent,” and then watch in total amazement when they would over hit, be surprised, or dump their shot in the net. Of course, I would initially think that was “luck”, but it just happened too many times, way too many times. In fact, when I was really in the zone, it happened so often it was uncanny. I was “seeing” things that would work, that I wasn’t aware of consciously, or would ever, logically, think to do. It was clairvoyant.

This begs the question, “Why does a shot seem to have more value if my ego chose it?” If it is intentional? That’s an important question. Because my ego is deciding what is of value. If doing my best is the goal, and I do better without the ego making choices, that’s better, but my ego doesn’t want to let go of control and glory. Glory is great, but on the ego’s terms. Good luck with that, speaking of luck (ha ha).

Of course, this could be a very long discussion, but basically, the concept of luck is very negative, and very limiting. And, supports a state of misery, even if it is intended in a lighthearted or humble way. Watch very closely the jokes you make in life. Your philosophy may be closely hidden within them and it might not be very funny. We are telling ourselves things that are at the heart of it, not loving, accepting or helpful at all. Language is so powerful, for good or for evil, for helpful, or for harmful. Consider what you are saying, and who is listening (your subconscious, your heart, your soul).

I often conclude my articles with “good luck out there,” (I’m so much a product of my culture — I’m sorry), but what I really mean, and should probably just say, is “Be present, trust, let go of control, and just perform.” After all, the ball goes where you hit it. Always has, always will.

Have fun out there!