

Minutes of the debate workshop held on January 27, 2015,  
Centre sportif Sous Moulin Thônex  
Speakers: Roberta Antonini Philippe (RAP) Georges André Carrel (GAC),  
Daniel Grosгурin (DG)

*1st musical interlude: Daniel Grosгурin: "Gigue" from Max Reger's  
Suite in D minor for cello solo*

To open the debate, **DG** talks about his reading of Tim Gallwey's works on the "inner game" of tennis and golf. The most important concept for him is the need to learn to let the spontaneous "I" express itself without being continually disturbed by the other "I", the one of education, of instruction, which continually wants to give instructions and interfere in directing the body's actions.

**GA Carrel:** to move towards creativity, the first level of motor learning is feeling: living and feeling the movement, loving the instrument, the ball. In sport, as in music, we need to repeat our scales to stabilize them, in variety, diversity and ever-changing environments. This is how we achieve mental and physical balance, technique and emotional stability.

**R Antonini:** Avoid negation in internal discourse: "don't make mistakes, don't go wrong". The brain retains only: "...make a mistake", "...make a mistake"! Everyone needs a different mental technique. You have to know yourself. If I'm too focused on what other people think of me, then it's a self-confidence problem. On the other hand, if it's a problem of preparation, look for routines and improve them.

**GAC:** 90% of success is in preparation: as a teacher, as a coach, as a player. Personally, I visualize the match an hour and a half beforehand, so that I'm not reacting but acting. Routines and rituals are very important in preparation and education: bag, water, banana, dry T-shirt, warm-up, etc. The team shouldn't pay the price for the preparation. The team must not pay for a member's lack of training. Discipline, fines for forgetfulness, lateness. After the game, Michael Jordan trains for 30 minutes if he misses a basket. He's demanding. The boss has to impose himself more than the others. End of training: routines, putting equipment back in place, apologizing if necessary. If there's a conflict with the coach before anything else: feet up against the wall, breathe, visualize the positive aspects of training and the match, only then talk.

**RAP:** control all possible parameters in advance; when to eat, take your equipment, etc. So you're ready to face the ones you can't change.

**GAC:** Sport teaches you who you are; every ball you touch carries your signature. It takes time to build and it's a continuous effort. Sport lets us know who we are. Don't leave the backbone of the mental quality that some have naturally, others need to acquire. A (volleyball) team is made up of 12 different individuals. Pedagogical differentiation requires us to get down to the players' level, especially if we're losing. At the break: "Sit down for 2 minutes, don't say anything, breathe, forget, "Wash" then build something new..." The coach, the teacher must build beings, not players, enter a culture where there is emotion, love, discipline.

**RAP:** this attitude of recognizing players is not widespread everywhere. What GAC proposes and practises is of great value, because each of us always needs recognition, understanding from a respected person: parent, teacher... Coaches also need to be coached!

**GAC:** allow children and young people to make mistakes. Above all, don't lecture them!

**DG:** It's important to address the group in such a way that everyone feels involved, just like the great conductors do.

**RAP:** By the age of 5, children are already familiar with the feeling of shame. Ashamed of having played badly, of having made a mistake, and so on. Don't make them feel guilty: they have the right to make mistakes too!

**DG:** For musicians, too, it's become very easy to record themselves, thanks to smartphones. Direct feedback is the best tool for progress, without the intermediary of a coach or teacher.

**GAC:** The Americans say: "What can be measured can be improved". We measure performance with batteries of computers. Nobody likes to be evaluated. But it's an evaluation with the aim of evolving, integrating measurement to make it a positive element of culture. Some young people build their own technique, mental preparation and visualization: empirically, through their own experience. Ideally, they're better in matches than in training.

**DG:** like musicians in concert versus in rehearsal!

**GAC:** don't play just, play well: strategy, tactics, aesthetics

**RAP:** some athletes or musicians experience or have experienced stressful situations far greater than those they have to face in the stadium or concert hall. This helps them to put things into perspective... They're centered and self-confident.

**DG:** learn to deal with situations over which they have no control: e.g. a referee's bad decision, a conductor's false entrance...

*2nd musical interlude: Simao Pedro and Hugo Paiva:  
Scherzo from David Popper's Suite for two cellos*

**GAC:** Where does the sound come from, where does the music come from? Is it important for you to experience it physically?

**GAC:** It's important to go beyond winning and losing: in play there's winning and losing. It's essential to let playing a game be a part in life. Between the poles of life: birth, death, illness, loss, the birth of children, there's the cello or volleyball: what happiness! The privilege of living one's passion!

**GAC:** importance of strengths. In a team, we look for complementarity and the addition of strengths. Reinforcing strengths

**Question from the floor:** How do you coach individual sporting performances as opposed to collective ones, or a soloist as opposed to an ensemble?

**GAC:** In a team, mistakes are no less important. Every ball must be improved, even if one part of the team plays fluidly and the other is unfocused; you must always put the ball back into play as best you can.

**DG:** In a quartet, mistakes are just as important as in a solo. Always avoid the trap of judging, improving on a partner's failure, whatever the difficulty.

**RAP:** Know the different techniques and use them according to personal or situational needs. But the use of a technique must not hide the cause of stage fright or stress. You need to identify the problem: for example, judgment anxiety, too much focus on the reaction of others, or a situation of failure due to bad form or injury. If I'm too focused on what other people think of me, then it's a self-

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