

Anticipation. . . everybody does it.

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Yes, everybody. In some form or another practically every bad shot that was not a grip or position issue was a form of anticipation. Jerking the trigger is in essence anticipation, bucking, heeling, flinching, all of them are a form of anticipation.

The problem is I don't feel anyone has ever really addressed the issue of how to correct it. Like a lot of things when it comes to shooting pistol, coaches could tell ya what you were doing wrong. They could even show you what you were doing wrong. Remember the "Ball and Dummy drill?" Put a dummy round mixed in with the live rounds and show the shooter that they are jerking the trigger or anticipating the recoil. Remember that one? I absolutely hate it and think there is no place on the range for it. The shooter would see the sights go away and the coach would say, "See, I told ya were jerking the trigger." This usually followed with, "don't do that!" Well thanks genius!

It doesn't take you to read this to know that if you are jerking the trigger, heeling, flinching, bucking or closing your eyes and you are aware of it that obviously you don't want to do that. So how do we stop doing that? That's where we seem to lose a lot of coaches. They can identify problems but cannot fix the problem. Imagine going to your mechanic and he tells you that the Flux Capacitor on your car is broken because, when you drive at 8:23 PM on a Saturday night in Myrtle Beach for 20 minutes looking for beer because you think they don't sell beer on Sundays in Myrtle Beach the Flux Capacitor will break, but doesn't know where it is or even how to fix it if he could find it. Would ya go back to that mechanic?

There is a solution to fix or identify a lot of these problems prior to them becoming shots in places we don't them to be. Say hello to the Shot Process. Welcome the Shot Process into your life. Get to know the Shot Process. Make it your own little Shot Process and raise it however you see fit, after all, it is YOUR Shot Process to cultivate and modify as you wish. If only children were that easy, well than again what fun would that be?

The Shot Process is your mental plan and checklist that ensures that you are doing everything the same every time in order to shoot tens. Everyone has shot a ten at some point. A ten that you shoot is no different then a ten that I, Jimmy Henderson, Steve Reiter or Phil Hemphill shoots. The difference is we shoot more tens. We have a routine that we follow everytime the gun leaves the bench. A lot of shooters even good shooters that took a long time to get good may not believe this. They may say they never developed Shot Process and they are good. Well guess what they did develop a routine and process over time. They developed a Shot Process or plan without really knowing it. What you need to do is actively develop that plan. Why would you wait and allow it to happen over thousands and thousands of rounds when you can be in control of the development and tweak the plan as you need.

I have heard shooters, good shooters, describe their Shot Process as, "Pick gun up, shoot gun, put gun down." While it is frustrating to hear a good shooter say that, that is almost my Shot Process now. This is a process now that I have been developing for 20 years. Yes I am still developing my Shot Process. In the beginning my Shot Process was long. I was told to write down everything I did in order to shoot one ten. Everything from the time I put the gun on the bench until the gun went into recoil. Just the part from loading the gun til the gun went bang filled one side of a piece of paper.

Everything that I had to do in order to shoot a ten needed to be confirmed that it was correct. I would dry fire and ensure that everything felt good from feet, hips, shoulders, grip, trigger felt good, confirmed the stage of fire I was about to shoot so I knew whether I was gonna shoot slow fire, timed or rapid. You have got to put to paper

everything you need to do to shoot a ten. How many shots you dry fire in slow fire, timed and rapid fire? How many breaths do you take before raising the gun? When do you breathe before raising the gun? Do you inhale the gun up and exhale to settle into the black or vice versa? (note you really should inhale on the way up and exhale to settle into the aiming area) What are you looking at? Irons, the dot, the target if shooting a dot maybe. Do you talk to yourself as the guns comes up? What do you say? Is it a phrase or key word. is it the same thing for all 3 stages of fire? (it really should be or at least really close) What is your visual focus on as the gun is raised? Are you looking at the front sight are you looking at the firing pin. Did you straighten you arm prior to raising the gun or did you just hap-hazzardly throw it up in the direction-of the target? When the gun settled in the aiming area was it acceptable or did you just figure that you could move your arm at the should or adjust the gun in your grip to get the sights where you want them to be? Was the grip proper when you dry fires and did you do something to screw it up when you chambered a round?

Those and **so many more** questions that need to be addressed in your Shot Process. The best way to learn this process is to have a partner there to write down everything you do and are thinking so that you do not take any short cuts. That is the easy part if you are honest with yourself and actually write down everything you do to shoot one well aimed shot. The hard part is following that process and being able to identify when you are not, or identify problems in the process and abort the shot in slow fire or fix it, expediently, in timed and rapid fire. You have got to be aware of all these steps and be honest with yourself and stop and fix them. If you think in slow fire that you muscle through an indicator and still make a good shot. I am here to tell you that if it does end up on occasion a good shot, you got lucky. I can't tell ya how many times I thought, "oh I can still shoot this and make it a ten." Almost every time I didn't shoot a 100 slow fire, there was that shot. Remember your training partner that helped write down your process? Now use him to ensure that you are in fact following that process that you developed Eventually, down the road, they will become subconscious acts. You will not have to ask yourself all these questions before each slow fire shot and each string of timed and rapid fire, your process will take over and you will automatically be able to identify the imperfections in all the steps and nuances of your process without asking yourself the questions. Maybe you to will reach the, "pick gun up, shoot gun, put gun down" Shot Process.

With proper trigger control and aiming, by following the Shot Process that you have developed for yourself, you can eliminate a lot of issues to include anticipation.

What makes a real difference is the ability to identify indicators earlier in the process. Most of us at some point have been able to call a shot and say where the shot went before scoping because you saw something happen as the shot broke. What you need to realize is that most of the time there was an indicator earlier in the process that was trying to tell you it was gonna be a bad shot. What we do is not pay attention to them and keep squeezing the trigger thinking that it will fix its self. Most of my shots that I abort are aborted before the gun settles into the aiming area. Yes that early in my process there is an indicator that tells me DO NOT let this shot go without fixing something.

Forget to mention that as Bulls-eye shooters we shoot 3 stages of fire, so do we need to develop 3 Shot Processes? No

The slow fire shot process is the process that will be used in timed and rapid fire as well. You may have to tweak the process that you developed in slow fire to ensure that it works in all three stage.

What is important to remember is that when in sustained fire we are responding to the commands from the tower. So when the tower is giving commande we need to be able to take the shot process that was developed in slow fire and plug it into the commands as to when we raise the gun. You want to avoid raising the gun to early or to late. If the gun is raised to early you will be looking at sight alignment, but telling yourself to not pull the trigger and we want the

trigger to be able to start moving as soon as the gun starts to settle. Remember this is why holding drills are a bad thing. In holding drills we are looking at the sights perfectly aligned and telling ourself to not pull the trigger and we want the finger to react to what the eye sees. If the gun is raised to late then the target will appear before we are ready and this will lead to jumping on the trigger before we are ready. So figure out in the commands how long it takes for the the gun to begin that initial settle into the aiming are and the trigger should start moving to the rear without the conscious thought of doing it.

Don't change the process, just figure out where in the commands you need to initiate your process. Ultimately we are trying to get the first shot of timed and rapid fire to break as the target turns, trying to avoid your finger reacting to the movement of the target.