Spooky. I am scared already just by looking at the graphics of this gazette. Don’t they remind you of the new cool graphics on your boards? Indeed, spooky Halloween is later this month. Last year our slopes opened on Halloween. Spooky again?! Wow! Just think, a few more weeks and we will be on a hill. Are you ready? My toenails are finally becoming normal-looking, just in time to start pressuring them inside my ski boots and messing them up again. But, that’s OK, it’s all worth it.

More and more often I ask myself questions “Why?” When I was a kid, I asked WHY a lot. But, later, I quit doing that. Perhaps I was embarrassed that others thought I was dumb, or something. Perhaps my curiosity decreased, or perhaps I was on autopilot just doing things. Maybe it is my current age that brings back my youthful inquisitiveness. Or, maybe it is my kids that ask me WHY that makes me want to know the reasons. But, unfortunately, often I do not have answers for them. Last year, my 9-year old son, (yes, I know, I am too old to have a 9-year old son, so don’t rub it in – he is NOT a mistake) asked me about pronunciation of “ch”. So, I told him, like in a word “chair.” But, little do I know. Try “ch” in a word “chef” or in “choir”. So now I find myself searching for reasons why “ch” takes on all these different sounds.

Yes, yes, so why do I put such strange things into our gazette? No, this is not a question coming from me. This is you asking WHY. I think that not enough people ask themselves, or others a question WHY or HOW. Truly, how often do you ask yourself a question “Why do I get up in the morning?” or “What drives me through the day?”, or “What is my life all about?” . Or perhaps less philosophical, like “How does electricity actually work?”, or better yet “Why am I rotating my hips when skiing?” or “Why am I sitting back and having hard time controlling my speed down the hill?”. I bet you anything, if we asked more questions, we would get to ski and ride much better in no time. Now you see what I am driving at, right? Ask questions, get the answers, put them into practice and watch your abilities skyrocket. So, before I change to another subject, look at the photo on the next page. Why is this Porta-Jon in the median? Where should I park my car so I could use it? Will I get a ticket? Will someone run into it while I am in it?
How about when you want to jump, do you actively retract your legs, or do you actively extend them? The answer depends as to what you actually want to do. Did you ever have someone ask you how you did something, and you had either no answer, or you really had to think about it? I distinctly remember taking this one violin lesson from one of the most famous violinists in the world. I asked him how to do something that I had trouble with. His answer was – “Like this!” He picked up his multi-million dollar instrument and showed me, just to crush my spirits. This translates to our own desires to improve in our own performance as well as our coaching abilities. Customers pay good money so that you can show them the way and answer their questions.

So, now that you are asking all these questions about skiing and riding, let me tell you that PSIA/AASI event leaders can really help you get your answers. You can even apply for scholarships if you postmark your application by October 4. Go to www.psia-e.org for more information. Before the ski season starts, you can get some answers by reading. There is a lot of great literature written on our sport. How about our own gazette? We too try to provide answers to the best of our abilities. Peak Performance contains lots of answers to your questions, so pick up a copy today off the web page that can be found at www.mathsci.appstate.edu/~wak/.

All the issues of Peak Performance are posted on the bottom of that page. Also, please, don’t hesitate to write me at Kosmalaw@bellsouth.net. Remember that our intentions for Peak Performance are to promote the snow sports to the best of our abilities, so your ideas are most welcome!

Now, if you prayed for rain over the summer, you can start praying for snow instead. Happy October and Happy Halloween to you all! Enjoy beautiful autumn colors.

Main Course

The Best Medicine: Sleep

By Eva Twardokens

Sleep has come into the spotlight again. From the days of “high carb, low fat” diets and the “sleep is for pussies” era, we have arrived at an unhealthy place. One of the initial ways to get your health back on track is to improve your sleep. The reasons for improving sleep are abundantly beneficial and affordable. Here’s how “early to bed and early to rise” will benefit your health.
Benefits:

Some of the main benefits of a great night’s sleep are: One, you will think clearer and have a consistently better mood pattern. Two, you will potentially lose weight or change your body composition. The potential to burn fat and build muscle increases when you get appropriate rest. Three, you will look better because your healing and replenishing patterns will be able to do their job. Four, you will help all of your hormones get back towards a natural state.

When 8 hours isn’t really 8 hours!

Eight hours really isn’t eight hours unless you live in a box with no light. Our body is programmed to deal with light rhythms, known as the circadian rhythm, in that your body’s hormones rise and fall with your exposure to light. So midnight to 8 a.m. is not going to give you the same replenishing rest as going to bed at 10 p.m. and sleeping until 6 a.m. Here’s why: At night your cortisol level starts to fall, and your melatonin level starts to rise. You simply get the best sleep when your cortisol levels are lower and your melatonin levels are higher. This is abundantly clear when you realize that the main job of cortisol is to increase blood sugar for immediate use in physical and emotional stress and that of melatonin is to cause drowsiness and lower body temperature. Cortisol starts to change direction and swing back up around 1-2 a.m. when melatonin is decreasing. Are you still sleeping when this happens? Yes, but the quality of your sleep diminishes as the waking hormone, cortisol, rises and the sleeping hormone, melatonin, falls. Ok, now for the doubters out there: some studies say we were two-phase sleepers back “in the day”. The sun went down, we slept for four hours, woke up for two social or productive hours, and then slept another four. The problem with this sleep model today is that now we have MML (man-made light). Remember all forms of light can kill melatonin secretion, and the environment we are dealing with, MML from computer screens, TVs and light fixtures forces us to be highly efficient sleepers and pack in a solid eight hours in order to get enough rest. Most of us don’t have 10 hours of darkness to play with!

“Fix It” Strategies

The first and simplest (not easiest) way to improve your sleep quality is to start turning down your electronics as early as possible. I am an advocate of putting my phone on “airplane mode” at 8 p.m. Most of my friends and clients know that if I’m not answering, I’m sleeping, or getting ready to. Avoid checking email and doing business unless it is urgent. What I’m saying is: start winding down and reduce your external stimuli as much as possible. Second, get your room as dark as you can, get blackout curtains, and keep the room at a cool temperature. NO light, period! That means no digital clocks, TVs, VCRs or other blinking type indicators. Some folks go as far as taking all electronics out of the bedroom. Reserve your bedroom for two things, ??? and sleep.

The other way to help you monitor your sleep is with an iPhone application like Sleep by MotionX, which not only monitors your sleep, but also has an alarm that wakes you at the optimal time in your sleep cycle. That way, you have an easier time getting those feet on the floor and starting the day! I use this monitoring system EVERY night. It also shows me how long it took me to fall asleep, how long I slept, and it shows my light sleep and deep sleep cycles. You can even use it to track your heart rate! They say one of the best ways to improve something is by monitoring it. “Wait a minute! You just told me to shut off my electronics and now you want me to sleep with them?” No. Shut down your electronics earlier in the evening. This means turning down your screen brightness, getting your phone on ‘Airplane Mode’ and setting your alarm. Then when you get into bed, all you have to do is start your Sleep by MotionX timer and you are off to lala land. No melatonin spared.

Wrap Up

Improving your quality of sleep is a major player in total health. Getting good quality sleep and letting your body repair and rejuvenate can really improve your overall quality of life. For practically every health and lifestyle issue out there, good sleep is a positive adjunct to improving everything you do, and how you feel about it! Do the best you can and take small steps in improving your sleep. You will see: It will make you Stronger, Healthier, and Happier!
Eva T. is a 2X Olympian in Alpine Skiing (Albertville and Lillehammer) and a 12 year veteran of the U.S. Ski Team. She has won 6 National Championships, Won a world Championship Bronze Medal, and is a World Technical Skiing Champion. She also is a Masters Weightlifting Champion. In 2011 she was inducted to the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame! She is now sharing her experiences from her athletic career and her knowledge in the Health and Fitness realm. As a sought after coach and consultant, she offers her services online as well as in person to help people experience an utmost quality of life! Check out Eva T. Strength and Conditioning website found at EvaTSC.com.

Active or Passive

By Witold Kosmala
PSIA-E Alpine, Level III
Ski School Trainer

Do you know which moves on skis are active and which are passive? Or does it matter? How do you practice passive moves?

Let’s put it this way, right after an active move follows a passive move. It’s like when you jump up: active move is pushing off the ground and passive is coming back down. Of course, if when in the air, you bend your legs some more, then that is an active move as well. Active movement is one that requires energy, and passive does not. Kicking a ball is an active movement, but what happens to the leg right after that is passive. You can exert energy only for so long, so active movement has to stop eventually. Then passive follows immediately afterwards. Take running for instance. Active move is to push off the ground and leap forward. The passive move is the leg bending in the knee resulting in a “butt kick.” OK, so let’s turn to this idea for a little longer since it is somewhat intriguing. Do you ever see runners warming up and intentionally performing butt kicks? So now, they changed the passive move to an active one! This must be terribly confusing for them, (unless they are skiers where the same move once can be active and once passive). Why in the world do runners do this? Did you ever try performing cross-under turns, (sometimes referred to as retraction turns) on your skis by actively bending (shortening) your legs in a transition? Doesn’t that take away from an active extension move before coming to the transition? Can that extension move be also active? The answer is in a question: how jerky do you want to be? (This means that retraction turns are not always true retraction turns. They are if the retraction is the active move. Perhaps “cross-under” is a better name when retraction is not an active move.) The idea I am trying to send across is that if a movement is supposed to be passive, don’t make it active. Sure, runners want to stretch and flex adequately, but being able to bend knees freely should be practiced by stretching and by other means, not by active butt kicks. In an active butt kick, runner might not be able to kick as high as if the movement was passive. The same goes for skiing. When you are performing a certain task, be sure you know what move is active. Do that correctly and passive movement will take care of itself with a little guidance.

Sometimes I hear instructors referring to passive moves as taking pressure away. In my opinion, we cannot generalize this activity as necessarily always being a passive move. Indeed, when you are pressuring on a boot with your big toe, and then relaxing it, the relaxing takes form of “taking away pressure,” which is a passive move. But, for example, to jump over a rock as you are skiing, you actively raise your feet by taking pressure away from your feet. (Of course, utilizing a pre-jump would make your task much more effective if you could see that rock sooner.) However, in cross-under turns, raising your feet is a passive move. You don’t in fact, raise your feet. They are raised automatically as a result of an active move that precedes transition. (Try performing some leapers and you will clearly see what I am talking about.)

Peak Performance
Now you are ready for a test. How about a couple of questions?

1. Are jetting skis an active or a passive move? (That is, do you actively make the skis jet, or is it a consequence of another move?)
2. Is a diverging uphill ski a passive or an active move?

These types of questions are very important because if these are skier’s active moves, then they are, perhaps, what instructor needs to fix. If these moves are passive, (that is, they are results of other moves), then those other moves need to be perhaps corrected instead. Repairing correct places will fix resulting problems. Like, if you have a roof leaking and the water drips through the ceiling, repairing the ceiling is pointless. It is the roof repair that will automatically fix the dripping ceiling.

To be a successful instructor, you need to decide why that student’s skis jet. Is it a result of a poor previous move (maybe getting on the heels, maybe pushing against the back of their boot, maybe rotating their feet toward the fall line, maybe dropping their arm, making a defensive moves due to fear, or doing some other things), or do they do it on purpose to speed up, or to initiate the next turn, or whatever else they might be wishing to do? This shows that the first question does not have one answer, sometimes the move is active, but most-likely it is passive, and sometimes it needs fixing and other times it needs to be perfected. For good skiers and racers, like Bode Miller, jetting skis can be an active move practiced religiously. For lower-level skiers, jetting skis are often result of incorrect moves that just precede jetting, and jetting is what they often fear. This jetting they often cannot manage and it results in less-than-desirable performance. As you can see, all my comments are wishy-washy since it all depends on the situation.

So, what about the second question? The answer is the same as above. Diverging uphill ski maybe an active and desirable move often exhibited by racers, but a passive undesirable move by less-skilled skiers. For those less-skilled skiers it is often unwise to repair the diverging ski scenario since usually the preceding move results in the diverging uphill ski, and the preceding move needs repair.

Yes, skiing is a complicated sport, but coaching it is probably even more complicated. Good luck to you all!

Here is Ted Ligety “jetting” to speed up. Look at the tails of his right ski decambered, whereas tips are not even engaged.
An Introduction to Basic Teaching Principles

By Ross McNeil
PSIA-E Alpine, Level II
USSA Certified Coach

Contents
The purpose of this article is to build a solid foundation for your teaching. This section outlines basic ideas and concepts that exist in any lesson regardless of skill level. This section includes focusing on different learning styles, effective teaching styles, content, developing progressions, and how to identify bad habits.

Understanding Learning Styles
Everyone intakes and processes information differently. An effective ski instructor has the ability to hand craft each lesson in order to cater the client.

We all take in information through all five senses, however we all have certain senses that we rely on more than others. There are three main types of learning styles. These are visual, verbal and kinesthetic learners. Visual learners best intake and process information through sight. These are individuals that depend heavily on precise and accurate demonstrations. Verbal learners are just what the name suggests, they learn through listening. Explanations must always remain clear and concise. Kinesthetic learners, learn through feel and touch. Explaining what certain body parts are experiencing during a skill help these guests the most. For instance, oppose to talking about the perfect body position, instruct them on the feeling the front of the boot. These types of learners benefit the most from guided mileage on the slopes.

The Lesson Environment
When thinking about the characteristics that a good ski instructor possess, first think about a favorite teacher you may have had in school. What were some things that made that teacher your favorite?

- What were their directions like?
- What was their temperament?
- What were your feelings while in class?
- Did you feel like you could ask questions?
- Did you feel like you could be yourself around that teacher?
- Was the classroom a stressful environment?

When you teach do you see any of these characteristics in yourself? With the answers about your favorite teacher, try to take these characteristics you value and implement them into your own teaching. Embrace these qualities and make them your own. Make it a point to embody these traits and clearly portray them to your lesson.

Now go through that same list of questions, but answer them about a teacher that you thought you disliked. Now being honest, do you possess any of these characteristics? You should do the exact opposite with these answers. If you do possess these characteristics attempt to eliminate them from your teaching style. An easy way to eliminate these traits is to identify when they are prevalent, and replace them with more positive traits. Do you become frustrated when a guest does not fully understand a basic concept? Instead of letting your frustration become clear, say something along the lines of how the concept can be tough to grasp and explain the task in a different manner. This instills confidence in the learner about their own abilities, and might be that boost that allows them to finally comprehend the information. Try to identify any negative characteristics that you may possess and work on them. This is vital to ensure that your student has a positive experience on the snow.

Peak Performance
**Teaching Styles**

There are various teaching styles. Explore them and be versatile. Most often we use a command teaching style, especially with beginners. This tends to be quick, effective and allows the learner to experience success quickly. After students gain experience on the snow and move on to becoming intermediate skiers other teaching styles become employable.

There are ways that you can put students together and they can help each other by making and sharing observations (reciprocal teaching.) Students can also learn from performing certain tasks or solving problems. Sometimes a larger group working together with many points of view provide a good learning environment. A guided discovery is when the instructor gets involved in the discussion and leads the students to the desired answer. Skiers enjoy watching other skiers. All this is part of learning and appropriate to use as teaching tools. We as teachers have to be able to present learning to our guests in many different ways because each guest learns in a different way. Some guests have to try many different ways of learning before they actually get a hang of an idea in question.

When choosing which type of teaching style to use there are several variable that should be taken into consideration. Age, temperament, sense of adventure, and ability levels all determine what type of teaching style is the best. Are you teaching advanced children that enjoy a sense of adventure that a guided discovery style brings? Or are you teaching lower level adults that are often timid and need a command teaching style? Some great indicators of temperament and sense of adventure can be revealed by knowing a clients hobbies, interest and careers.

As you teach attempt to remain humble and teachable. After a lesson, process how your lesson went. Would you rate it a success or failure? Did you meet your expectations in your own teaching? What would you say worked very well? What parts of your lesson could you specifically improve on? What are some specific strategies you could implement to improve you lesson?

**Setting Goals**

Setting goals at the beginning to a lesson is pivotal in having a successful lesson and is often overlooked. Setting a goal answers the two basic questions of where should a lesson start? How much information should a lesson cover? The answers to these questions vary and are dependent on the lesson. The prior student experiences (on or off the snow) dictate where to start a lesson and how much content should be covered.

When beginning, it is essential to talk with your student. You may discover information that may benefit you. If nothing else, just by talking with your student you are going to allow them to become more relaxed, and ready to learn.

Let the learner set goals for what they hope to accomplish during the lesson. Each lesson may need guidance when determining these goals to ensure they are realistic. All goals should be realistic and desirable. For instance an intermediate skier who wants to get better in the park would not enjoy a lesson on the importance of pole planting. Instead this lesson could focus on learning their first 180. Let these goals drive the lesson and determine success.

Remember there is no mold for what a lesson should include. Individualize your lesson to best suite your client. What does your client want to learn? What skills do they need to reach this goal? Be intentional with what you teach. Everyone learns differently so be sure to present the information in a manner that is the easiest for the learner. Some guests do not know what they want to learn, then you as an instructor get to help guide them to a goal they believe is desirable and achievable.

**Technical Content**

Each skill in skiing has a distinct characteristic in relation to edging, pressure and rotary movements all while being in a dynamic balanced position. The degree of edging, pressure, and rotation is what separates when each skill is learned, used and its overall difficulty.
Skiing is a blending of these skills in a manner that allows you to successfully navigate the slopes. Know what you’re teaching and how these concepts relate to the skill you are presenting.

**Where to begin?**

Remember your lesson has set a goal for the lesson. When watching a client ski for the first look at what the ski is doing. Ideally the ski should bend from the middle, twist from the middle and edge evenly and progressively. What is the ski really doing? Is it bending towards the back? Does the ski twist around the tip of the ski? Does the ski edge and stay at the same edge angle? Which ski performance is hindering the client from reaching their goal?

Once you identify what ski performance is lacking you can link it to the corresponding body performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ski Performance</th>
<th>Body Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bending</td>
<td>For/Aft, Matience (Pressure moves that ensure you stay in balance), or Foot to Foot Pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twisting</td>
<td>Rotary Movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edging</td>
<td>Tipping Movements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only teach relevant information necessary to reaching the overall goal. Do not worry if a clients movements are perfect and ideal. Not even our own skiing is perfect every turn. Address the biggest needs first and teach them well. Avoid over-teaching and moving around from different ideas throughout one lesson. It’s better to teach a lesson that focuses on one skill well instead of skipping from skill to skill quickly. Remember Rome wasn’t built in a day, and neither was any skier.

**Summary**

Effective instructors are able to take their knowledge and successfully communicate it to their guests. Provide an optimal learning environment for your lesson. Teach to various learning styles. This ensures that each lesson is individualized to our clients, allowing them to learn exponential amounts more than any “stock” lesson. Provide information in a manner that allows your clients to feel relaxed, comfortable and open to new thoughts and ideas. Evaluate your teaching performances constantly. Remain humble about teaching and to learning new ideas. Always improve your lessons based off of past lessons. Most importantly have fun with your lesson. Remember, no one wants to pay for a lesson with an instructor who is unhappy and not welcoming to their needs, let alone tip them afterwards. So get out there, smile, laugh, turn left and right and enjoy each and every lesson.

**Quick Reference for Terms Used in this Section**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Learning Style</td>
<td>Learning by seeing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Learning Style</td>
<td>Learning by hearing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic Learning Style</td>
<td>Learning by doing and feeling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edging</td>
<td>Amount of tilt a ski has off of the snow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotary / Rotation</td>
<td>Turning and guiding of skis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure</td>
<td>The amount of force placed on a ski. Pressure is any combination of any force from fore/aft, matience (pressure moves necessary to stay in balance) and foot to foot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resorts Move Toward KneeBindings for Employees

By Witold Kosmala
PSIA-E Alpine, Level III
Ski School Trainer

Resorts do not traditionally purchase equipment for employees. But a new binding company, KneeBinding, Inc. of Stowe, Vermont, is giving them some compelling reasons to do just that.

On-the-job knee injuries (especially ACL tears and ruptures) are particularly expensive for ski resorts, not only because of the significant medical and rehabilitation costs, but also due to lost wages and long-term complications. According to Kiri Moore, Safety Director at Smugglers’ Notch Resort in Vermont, an on-the-job ACL injury costs the resort a minimum of $50,000 and can run more than $100,000. And she says there is also a significant human cost. “I think it’s a psychological challenge, as well, to come back from an injury like that,” said Moore. “I’ve seen lots of friends and employees have this injury, and it’s tough.”

KneeBinding is a high-performance binding that offers a third release mechanism other bindings don’t have – specifically designed to detect the forces that cause rearward-twisting knee injuries, and to release before the injury can occur. On all other brands of alpine bindings, the injury rate for the dreaded, rearward-twisting ACL injury is approximately 1 for every 1,900 skier days. “But no one has ever reported this type of injury on KneeBindings,” said Chairman John Springer-Miller. “There are other ways to get hurt on skis, of course, but we have effectively solved the most frequently reported malady on skis – the rearward-twisting knee injury.”

After five years on the market, KneeBinding has been well-proven to mitigate the risk of knee injuries, and resorts are taking note. Last season, KneeBinding began conducting small trials with resorts for reliability, durability, suitability, and usability. Smugglers’ Notch was the first to complete its trial, and based on its success, the resort has contracted with KneeBinding to provide bindings to most of its skiing employees this fall. The employees will pay nothing, and the resort will pay a small fraction of the cost of even a single injury.

KneeBinding acknowledges that resorts have never before provided ski bindings to employees as part of their on-slope safety programs. “But it makes a great deal of sense,” said Springer-Miller. “Employees who ski on KneeBindings have a lot fewer serious injuries than employees who ski on ordinary bindings. Resorts that provide KneeBindings to their employees can save a lot of knees, and save the large amount of money it takes to fix them.”


KneeBinding is already available in hundreds of shops in 12 countries, and is bringing new ski shops in as Authorized Retailers all the time.
Health Course

How to Prevent “Choking”
Under Pressure

By Bonnie Church

You’ve practiced. You are ready to give that speech, or play that piano recital or take that test. Yet when the pressure is on, you flounder. Your mouth goes dry and your throat tightens when you are handed the microphone. Your fingers become like sausages when you sit down at the piano. Your draw a blank when you look at the questions on the test.

It’s called choking.

Choking is defined as – not performing at optimum capacity under pressure. I am not talking about the anxiety that results from not being prepared. I am talking about freezing up even though you have practiced or studied and are ready to perform.

It’s real. We choke under pressure due to the effect of stress on our thought processes. Some of us are more prone to it than others, but there are research-supported techniques you can use to prevent it.

JOURNAL BEFORE A STRESSFUL EVENT: Writing down your thoughts when you are facing a stressful situation, clears away the anxious thoughts and regulates the stress hormones.

GRAZE ON REAL FOOD. Your brain is a 3 lb. hog. It eats most of what you eat. This means your food dramatically affects your brain function. Sugar spikes and cells gummed up with the wrong kind of fats [heated, hydrogenated fats and too much saturated fat] reduce brain power. When you need to perform well, graze on small amounts of good food, mostly vegetables and lean proteins throughout the day. Avoid sugary, processed foods. This will provide a steady stream of nutrients for the brain. Also be sure to drink at least 8 glasses of water.

MEDITATE AND PRAY. Research shows these practices calm your soul and heal your mind. Stress damages your memory, your motor skills and your ability to make decisions. Ultimately, this will affect your ability to perform at optimum capacity.

SPEAK POSITIVE AFFIRMATION. Words have power. We are continually carrying on conversations with ourselves. If we speak positive things to ourselves it stokes our confidence. Confidence improves performance and makes it less likely that we will be choked by anxiety.

CREATE WORDS THAT POISE YOU FOR ACTION [but not too many!] In one study some skilled golfers were instructed to perform putts in three different ways. Players in the first group focused on three words related to physical technique (such as “head,” “weight” and “arms”); the second group focused on three words that had nothing to do with the putt (for example, “red,” “blue” and “green”); and the third group focused on a single word that described the putting motion (such as “smooth”).

Initially, the golfers putted in a low-pressure situation, and most of them did well. The pressure was increase by offering a money reward for performing well. Major differences surfaced between the 3 groups. Those who were utilizing just one word – smooth – performed better than those who were using a number of words to monitor their performance.

PRACTICE UNDER PRESSURE. Ratcheting up the pressure at your practice sessions is the best way to avoid choking when it counts. Before making a speech, practice in front of a video camera and let a friend review it. Play a sport with someone more skilled than you and ask for feedback. This will trigger the anxiety that you are
likely to experience during the actual performance. Exposure beforehand will diminish the stress-response when the time comes.

**DON’T SELF-MONITOR.** The part of our brain that is most involved in learning a new task is the cerebral cortex. When you play a piece of music, rehearse a speech or practice a sport over and over again, you gradually transfer the control of that activity from the cerebral cortex to another area of the brain – the cerebellum. To perform well, you need to stay in the cerebellum supported “zone”. If you are continually ‘checking your progress’ you are engaging another part of the brain. This will bog you down and choke you. Too much self-monitoring hinders performance.

In sum, if you want to perform optimally, prepare your mind, your emotions and your body and when the time comes to perform, just do it. And do it with all your heart.

*Bonnie Church, CNC, CTLC, CLC* – Bonnie is a wellness columnist for All About Women Magazine, a Certified Life and Wellness Consultant and certified Trainer for the TLS Weight Loss Solution. Bonnie has conducted wellness and motivational seminars throughout the US. She served as a writer/consultant for an internationally marketed weight loss system for kids. She recently co-authored, with Lydia Martinez, “Coach Lydia’s No-nonsense Guide to Getting Off your Butt, Out of your Rut and On with your life.” Please, visit [www.alifenow.com](http://www.alifenow.com) for more information.

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**Dry-Land Training**

**Narrow Stance or Wide?**

*By Witold Kosmala*

**PSIA-E Alpine, Level III**

**Ski School Trainer**

There is so much discussion about the width of the skier’s stance. Some coaches say “wider, wider,” and others say “narrower, narrower.” Some skiers say, “I ski in a wide stance.” Others say, “my stance is always narrow.” So, what should it be? In my opinion, the answer is actually quite simple. If you consider yourself an expert skier, you should be able to vary your stance according to the need. In this article I am not going to talk about racer’s stance, which definitely depends on the pressures involved. Here, I will focus on intermediate skiers who ski with skis parallel to each other. We will explore this concept on dry land before going to the slopes.

Put each of your feet on separate sheets of paper. Best is to strap wax paper under each of your feet separately or perform the exercises on a slick or sandy surface. Now, stand with feet close together (1 inch apart like in a diagram on the side) and try to rotate. Very hard, right? You might even wish to put in some shoulders and hips to make this turning (pivoting) possible. Now spread your feet so they are about 4 – 6 inches apart and try to pivot again. Easier? You bet. If you were to do these pivots on sandy surface or on the snow, the resulting imprint will look like a bowtie. BUT, beware! This pivoting is not correct while skiing, so use this exercise ONLY to illustrate that turning feet which are further apart is easier then when the feet touch each other. The reason why this pivoting...
is not correct when skiing is that each sheet of paper turns around its own center, whereas on skis there should be only ONE center of the pivot for BOTH feet. This can be interpreted to mean that standing on two “lazy Susans,” for instance, is not correct, but standing on one – is. When pivoting on one lazy Susan you can see how outside leg moves forward, but the inside one tucks back. Here again be careful, you do not wish your hips to swing out.

For the sake of clarity, in these diagrams the feet are about 10 inches apart. They are easy to pivot, especially when you put most of your weight on the toes. But, if pivoted around their own centers, a definite tip lead results. All of sudden one ski is pressured on the tails and the other on the tips. Not good in general skiing. Cross under or cross over is restricted by the inside foot. There are benefits and draw backs to every drill. So, illustrate the drill to your guests, but don’t over-practice it, so you will not create other problems for your student. Remember, it does not take long to learn a bad move. But, you as an instructor, need to practice all drills so you can clearly illustrate them. So, you need to learn the good and the bad.

Here, feet are about 6 – 8 inches apart. They are both placed on ONE lazy Susan and pivoted in its center. Since the inside foot tucks “back” some, it makes it easy for the upper body to travel across this inside ski for proper turn initiation, or for the skis to cross under the upper torso. I put “back” in quotes because this is how the move will feel for you when you ski, but in actuality there is no movement backwards, just a less active steering.

You can also do this drill on snow. Brace planted poles at the hips to stabilize your upper body to prevent hip rotation and attempt pivoting with feet touching each other and then gradually separating them. Determine when pivoting becomes easier. See the photos on the next page.

So, what is it really that I am saying here? Am I saying that you should not ski with your feet together? In fact, that is correct and no one actually does ski with feet right together any more when not on pencil-shaped skis because waists of the skis are too wide. What about bumps and powder? If you are in bumps your skis might also be too wide under your feet to permit your boots to touch each other. If you have narrower skis in their waist, then most-likely their tips are wide and if your feet touch then those tips will go on top of each other. Not good. So, try 4 inches apart and you are off to a good start. Also, if you are coaching intermediate skiers and their feet will be only 2 inches apart, they will have hard time turning. So, to help themselves turn, they will throw their body around, rotate shoulders and hips back and forth, not being able to advance to the next level. Look for that when teaching. But, on the other hand, nice and close feet will allow you to change edges very quickly and let you utilize your inside ski readily. Wider stance will give you higher edge angles (unless you A-frame), less
overturning of the body, ease in steering, but much slower edge change, most-likely tip lead and awkward when pressures are low. Will the stability be better with wide stance – no, not in my opinion. Try walking like a cowboy (sorry western guys, just a terminology!) with feet laterally far from each other. You will look like you have a problem with ..., you will wobble, and feel unstable. So, my bottom line is: start skiing with your feet 6

My brother Andrzej demonstrates the ease of pivoting when boots are 4 inches apart while standing on his toes. This body position, in fact, promotes a forward movement, but provokes the heel thrusting. You just simply cannot win, can you?

Andrzej’s pivoted legs on their toes create an extensive tip lead. But, his hips did not move while pivoting. This is a great exercise for those that ski with feet too close together, those who rotate their torso, those that do no steering with their feet and for all park-and-riders.

Peak Performance
inches apart and go from there with adjustments either way according to the needs.

Now, what about the concept of keeping skis “shoulder-width apart”, or “hip-width apart?” In my opinion this means feet should be not too close and not too far from each other. This is a statement of awareness for beginners about location of the feet in a “home position.” I prefer measuring feet separation in inches instead of width of the shoulders. Some broad men would have to ski in a really wide parallel making it very uncomfortable, whereas kids would have to practically touch their feet together with their bulky boots. I try to never stereotype, each person is different and requires personal attention.

Disclaimer: Views and ideas in this article are my own. There was no ski organization of any sort that endorsed this article prior to its publication. It is fine with me if you disagree with some or all of its content. Only suggestions are given here and not the law. I take no responsibility for any injuries resulting from your skiing according to my recommendations.

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Turn to Wisdom

- Sometimes we are so busy adding up our troubles that we forget to count our blessings.
- Falling down doesn’t make you a failure, but staying down does.
- Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt.
- I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. – Maya Angelou
- The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good.

Peak Performance
Thoughts for the Month

• What are “sideslips?” Are they good to do, when, where and why?
• Is skiing and riding truly all about having fun?
• On the slopes, what is a “fall line?” What is meant by a “double fall line?”
• Bowties represent foot pivoting, but do not always correctly represent foot’s action while skiing. Can you think of instances when bowties are correct movements and instances when bowtie movement is not correct?

Elaborations on last month’s Thoughts for the Month.

Question: Can more sleep actually help shed pounds, why or why not?

Answer: Yes, more sleep can actually help shed pounds. When you are sleeping, you cannot reach to the refrigerator or pantry. But, there is more to this. When you are rested, you are eager to perform physical activities and they are usually with higher energy level then when you are tired. When you are tired due to less sleep for whatever reasons, you will feel sluggish, move around less. Also, medical research shows that tired people get more hungry due to raised levels of ghrelin, the hunger hormone. Less sleep – more hungry you feel. So, not only you consume more calories, but you also expend less energy. So, get a good night’s rest and loose weight.

Question: Is sleep really a good medicine?

Answer: It is excellent medicine. Read what 2-time Olympian Eva T. has to say about sleep on page 2 of this gazette.

Question: What is meant by “palming the ski poles?”

Answer: Put the top of the pole in the palms of your hands and push, forward or backward. This is commonly done in the lift lines and when skating or performing herringbone (see photo.) If you are just bracing yourself or side-stepping, then we normally do not call it palming since there is no motion. The same goes when you are performing bull-fighter’s turn, (see photo.)

This is a good angle for poling, which would result in pushing me forward, like in a lift line or when using herringbone to go up the hill. (By the way, how do you like my new K2 Triax poles?)

Here is a pole in the palm of my hand, but I am not poling this way since it is at a wrong angle. This angle would result in pulling, which only beginners want to do.
Question: What is a pre-jump and when is it used in skiing and snowboarding?

Answer: See next month’s Peak Performance.

This and That

INCLINATION ON THE ROAD

1997 Mercedes-Benz F300 Life Jet, like Toyota which we showed you in our April 2013 issue of Peak Performance, inclines when you drive on the roads. You don’t need to ride a bike to get this feeling any more. Just get you this little Mercedes. Maybe Chrysler will also get its own version one day.

Peak Performance
BUT, I STILL WANT TO GET TO THE SLOPES ON TIME,

So I was thinking of getting one of these Hexawheel extreme off-road vehicle which combines a six-wheels layout and a flexible frame with a Mercedes-Benz-inspired design language. Basically nothing stands in its way.

6 x 6 vehicles actually were around for a long time. Check out this Metrac of Meili from 1958 pictured on the left as it goes over a wall. Surly, if I had one of these, I could drive over anything that was in the way and would never be late to the slopes.
Announcements

• Attention PSIA/AASI members, did you know that you receive a 15% discount at more than 6,200 Choice Hotels International® locations worldwide when you book utilizing the Special Rate ID number dedicated to PSIA-AASI members for use in making discounted reservations? In order to ensure that you are getting the best possible rate, please access PSIA/AASI preferred rates by using the new Special Rate ID 00224550. If you are using an older special rate ID, please make sure to note the current ID, as older rate IDs will be deactivated shortly. To receive the discount, you should go to www.choicehotels.com, or call (800) 258-2847 and use the new Special Rate ID 00224550.

• PSIA-E/AASI scholarship applications need to be postmarked no later than Friday, October 4, 2013. If you fax your application, please call to confirm receipt. The PSIA-E/AASI fax number is (518) 452-6099. For more information, go to www.psia-e.org/ms/eastbenefits/scholarships/.

• Sugar Mountain Resort Oktoberfest is Saturday, October 12, 2013 – Sunday, October 13, 2013. Enjoy the two-day Oktoberfest from 10:00am until 5:00pm in the North Carolina Mountains. The event features live Bavarian music by the Harbourtown Fest band, German and American food & beverages; children's fun center; hay rides; local & regional craft fair; lift rides; winter sports shop sale, lodging specials and much, much more. Don’t miss it!

Pet of the Month

Sarah Dockery Bliss on Iron Talisman ("Willie") at Tryon Show. Need we say more?