

COUGARS

PITCHING

BASEBALL'S 6TH TOOL – The Self-Evaluation

- 1) Look at your ERA, BB per 9 innings, innings pitched per year, etc. Are they as high or as low as you believe they could be?
- 2) Examine your consistency: Do you play in the upper third of your ability level? Or do you have major ups and downs, sometimes being in the zone and displaying your true ability, and then correcting the “mistake” and drifting back to your comfort zone (CZ)? Do you see a pattern here?
- 3) Do you struggle at specific times? For example do you start the year strong (or poorly) and then cool down (or heat up)? Maybe it's the first inning or the fourth or fifth that always causes the problem for you. Can you see a specific pattern in your performance that has developed over the years?
- 4) Examine your dominant thought patterns. For example, if you listed “I always tire at 100 pitches” does your self-talk support this belief? Have you ever thought I'm good for 100 pitches then I tire out? You may not actually physically tire after 100 pitches, but you will tire if that's your belief. The real culprit may be your self-talk, which activates your mind to search for exhaustion as you approach this limit. This is an example of self-fulfilling prophecy. Your inner dialogue may have set the limit. Is your self-talk positive? Can you identify negative self-talk in any phase of your game that may set self-imposed limits?
- 5) Are there any behaviors that may be counterproductive to your success? Ask yourself questions such as, “Am I a pleaser, always trying to please coaches or others?” “Do I have difficulty following rules or being on time?” “Am I a good teammate?” “Do I have trouble communicating with coaches or teammates?” “Do I have trouble following through with commitments I make?”
- 6) Look at your numbers. Have you produced them consistently over time, or have you produced them in spurts?
- 7) Is there any part of your game where you're not as satisfied as you like to be?
- 8) Do you have written goals or are your goals only in your mind? Research points out written goals are more powerful than unwritten goals. If not written down, the goals you have in mind are merely dreams or desires, not real goals that stimulate your unconscious mind.
- 9) Are your goals realistic? Have you set them high enough to motivate you, or have you set them within your comfort zone so as not to feel pressure? Ask yourself, “Have I set realistic goals, or were they too high or too low?”

- 10) Are you flexible with your goals? As circumstances change, are you open to revisiting and adapting them as needed?
- 11) As you approach your goals, do you reset them before you accomplish them? Once you near a goal, the tendency is to back off and lose momentum rather than to reset them at a higher level. This is especially true when you've played below your belief, you've gotten hot and are approaching your comfort zone. This prevents you from breaking out on the topside.
- 12) What thoughts, self-talk, or beliefs do you have that may be self-limiting?
- 13) Have you been told by coaches that you need to correct a behavior or do something differently, yet you believe you are fine just the way you are? Maybe you've heard you're negative, not attacking the strike zone, need to be more of a leader, etc. What are some things coaches have told you in the past that you might have resisted? Revisit them now in your mind.
- 14) What off-field behaviors may affect your on-field performance? Do you get enough rest at night? Has anyone ever suggested you drink too much? Maybe party too hard? Have poor eating habits? Do you fret about things you can't control? Are you negative in your home setting?
- 15) What type of people do you hang around with? Are they supportive and heading in the same direction as you are? Do they encourage positive behaviors that will further your career?
- 16) Have you placed extra stress on yourself because you feel you need to live up to expectations? How about stressing because you are draft eligible or trying to make the team?