

CORE LESSON 14: STAYING COOL

While Core Lesson 13 introduced the three tips for having fun, Core Lesson 14 teaches PLAYers another way to deal with their emotions in challenging situations. PLAYers are introduced to the 4Rs—Replay, Relax, Ready, Redo—a strategy for self-management that can be used on the golf course or in non-golf settings. It is important to note the 4Rs can be used effectively not only when facing a challenging situation, but also when reinforcing positive events and experiences.

When specifically applied to golf, the 4Rs can be utilized as a postshot routine. A postshot routine includes the physical, mental and emotional processes that enable PLAYers to anchor their good shots and replace their not-so-good shots. By teaching PLAYers to attach emotion to a positive experience, they are more likely to recall what they do well when dealing with challenging situations in the future. Basically, emotions are like a “highlighter on the brain,” so by teaching PLAYers to use the 4Rs to anchor what is good, coaches can help them develop greater confidence on and off the golf course.

GENERAL LEARNER OBJECTIVES

After completing multiple classes on Core Lesson 14, Par-level PLAYers should be able to:

- State and define the 4Rs.
- Describe how the 4Rs can be applied to learning and playing golf.
- Understand (Par 3) that the 4Rs can be applied to non-golf tasks and situations.
- Demonstrate (Par 4) how to use the 4Rs in a golf setting.
- Exhibit (Par 5) the 4Rs as a postshot routine in a golf setting.
- Experience and understand the importance of clubface and ball contact, as well as explore different ways to make solid clubface and ball contact when playing golf.
- Utilize the 4Rs on more than one occasion in a non-golf setting; be aware and able to share with coach and other PLAYers in follow-up classes on this core lesson.
- Understand (Par 3), demonstrate (Par 4) and exhibit (Par 5) the physical healthy habits of energy, play and safety.

LIFE SKILL CATEGORY ADDRESSED

- Self-management

SPECIFIC LIFE SKILL STRATEGY DEVELOPED THROUGH THIS CORE LESSON:

- 4Rs—Replay, Relax, Ready, Redo

SUGGESTED PAR PROGRESSION FOR GOLF SKILL CATEGORIES AND GOLF FUNDAMENTAL



- Clubface and ball contact (for putt, chip, pitch, full-swing)

COACHES' SEAMLESS DELIVERY TIP



EXAMPLE Coaches help PLAYers in the development of self-management by integrating Par Core Lesson 14 (Staying Cool) with golf skill categories—putt, chip, pitch and/or full-swing; and golf fundamental—clubface and ball contact. In this example, coaches would create games that require PLAYers to stay cool using the 4Rs after each shot. During the first R—Replay—PLAYer would be encouraged to be aware of where their clubface was pointed at contact (the first factor of influence for clubface and ball contact).



Bridge to Golf & Life by asking questions such as: *How will you use the 4Rs when playing golf? What is another area of your life where you will use the 4Rs?* Challenge PLAYers to use the 4Rs in golf or another environment before the next class.

LIFE SKILL CORE ACTIVITIES

During the first class on Core Lesson 14, coaches are encouraged to deliver at least one core activity below seamlessly with at least two golf skill categories (putt, chip, pitch and full-swing) and one of The First Tee Nine Golf Fundamentals. (See previously suggested Par progression as well as Golf Skills section of this guide for more information.)

Depending upon time available per class and the total number of classes, coaches may save some activities for subsequent classes. Coaches are encouraged to deliver each core activity and, as they gain experience, develop additional activities for their PLAYers.

Life Skill Core Activity 14.1: Practicing the 4Rs

PLAYers apply the 4Rs in a golf practice session

Life Skill Core Activity 14.2: Testing Your Cool

PLAYers explore conditions that foster self-doubt or anxiety

Life Skill Core Activity 14.3: Developing a Postshot Routine

PLAYers learn how a postshot routine helps anchor the positive emotions and better control the negative emotions

Life Skill Core Activity 14.4: 4Rs Version of Bingo-Bango-Bongo

PLAYers learn to use the 4Rs to manage their emotions while playing an up-and-down course and earning points on each hole—similar to the game Bingo-Bango-Bongo

Life Skill Core Activity 14.5: Ladder Toss

PLAYers learn that they don't always have to go for the most challenging target first

Life Skill Core Activity 14.6: Using the 4Rs in Other Situations

PLAYers use the 4Rs at The First Tee and at home or school and then document the experience in their Yardage Book

CORE LESSON 14: INTRODUCTION—USING THE 4RS

Supplies needed: The First Tee Par Yardage Books, club and ball for coach roleplay

1. Spend a couple of minutes reviewing the three tips for having fun. Ask:

- *What are the three tips for having fun?*
- *Which of the tips have you used since we met last time?*
- *How did they work for you?*

2. Coaches roleplay a golf situation in which they mess up a shot. If you are on a putting green, miss a short putt, for example, or pretend to be practicing chip shots and keep hitting the ball fat or thin. Pretend to completely whiff a full-swing. Express anger and frustration. Say things like:

- *I hate this game!*
- *What a lousy putt.*
- *I stink!*

(Later in this lesson you will go through the same scenario [or another example], but apply the 4Rs effectively rather than losing your cool.)

3. Spend a few minutes asking PLAYers one or two of the following questions:

- *Do you ever get angry at yourself when you practice or play? Do you lose their temper? Call yourself names? Start blaming other people?*
- *Do you ever get really nervous when you are trying to hit the ball?*
- *Do you feel like you are having fun?*
- *Does getting angry or nervous make you play better or worse?*
- *What are the first two of the three tips for having fun? (Be patient; Be positive.)*
- *Is it hard to be patient and positive when you are angry and frustrated?*

4. Ask PLAYers to turn to the appropriate pages in their Par Yardage Book. Core Lesson 14 focuses on the 4Rs — a self-management strategy that helps them learn to control their emotions and stay cool while they practice or play.

If you are frustrated and lose your temper, it is not good golf etiquette. It shows a lack of respect for oneself and for the game. And, it can even make you play worse. You can use the 4Rs to stay cool, as well as to anchor what you do well. The 4Rs are:



REPLAY: In your head, replay what happened and what you did. *What did you want to happen? What actually happened? Do they match?*

- ★ If what you wanted to happen and what actually happened are the same, then you should anchor the good shot by taking a few seconds to enjoy what you did well and store it in your memory. Many PLAYers use a physical movement, such as a fist pump or a simple twirl of the club to help them store away the good shot in their long-term memory. There is no need to proceed any further than Replay in this instance.
- ★ If what you wanted to happen and what actually happened are different, then you should proceed with the remaining Rs (see next page).



RELAX: Take a couple of deep breaths.

★ When you inhale count slowly—one, two, three, four—to yourself. When you exhale count slowly—one, two, three, four, five—to yourself. Make sure your exhale is longer than your inhale and this will help you relax on the exhale.

★ For advanced PLAYers, coaches could add the following statement: Counting to yourself while breathing can also help take your mind off of what just happened and minimize the intensity and duration of your emotional reaction. *How many of you think this could help you perform better on the golf course and in life?*



READY: Think about what you need to do differently next time.

★ Say to yourself, *Next time I am in this situation I will _____.*

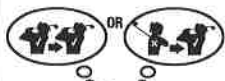


REDO: Imagine yourself doing it better. You can also take a physical practice swing or stroke that matches what you imagine.



The 4Rs will help you think about what you did well or what you need to improve—not what you did wrong. They will help you be patient and positive and have more fun. Now I am going to show you how to use the 4Rs.

5. Demonstrate how to use the 4Rs. Coaches apply the 4Rs to the previous roleplay situation that was demonstrated, or use a different example to model how to use the 4Rs as a postshot routine after you fell off balance and the ball ended up way right of your intended target:



REPLAY: Ask yourself, *What happened there?* Your response might be, *I swung too hard and wasn't able to stay balanced throughout my swing.*



RELAX: Feel yourself taking a deep breath, with a slow exhale.



READY: Remind yourself, *Next time I need to hold my balanced finish until I can see the ball land.*



REDO: Take a practice swing and hold your balanced finish; imagine yourself holding your balanced finish while doing this.



LIFE SKILLS CORE ACTIVITY 14.1: Practicing the 4Rs

Supplies needed: Clubs, balls

The purpose of this activity is for PLAYers to apply the 4Rs while performing a golf skill. Coaches can use any golf skill game or activity that is appropriate for the skill level of the PLAYers.

1. Begin a golf skill practice session with the PLAYers. Make the task fairly challenging for the particular group you are working with. For example, have them:
 - Roll the ball into the hole from more than 10 feet
 - Sink three putts in a row from six feet; chip three out of five balls within three feet of the hole
 - Hit five balls up in the air with a full-swing
2. Let them practice for a few minutes. Remind them to be aware of how they feel when they achieve or do not achieve the goal of the activity.
3. Stop the practice and have PLAYers pair up, with one partner hitting and the other observing.
4. Tell them to apply the 4Rs after each putt, chip or full-swing. Each participant should talk through the 4Rs while the partner listens. After doing this a few times, the PLAYer and partner reverse roles.

Coaches should circulate through the group to see how well PLAYers are applying the 4Rs. When the need arises, help them in using the 4Rs.

5. Reassemble the group for a five-minute discussion. Close the activity with a mini wrap-up including questions such as:
 - *Did everybody understand how to use the 4Rs?*
 - *What was your experience like using the 4Rs? How did you feel after using them?*
How did using the 4Rs affect the results?
 - *What relationship is there between the 4Rs and a postshot routine for each shot in golf?*

LIFE SKILL CORE ACTIVITY 14.2: Testing Your Cool

Supplies needed: Bucket of range or tennis balls; empty bucket (alternate set-up requires putters and balls)

The purpose of this activity is to have PLAYers explore feelings of self-doubt or anxiety and learn how to deal with them.

1. Ask someone in the group to volunteer to help you demonstrate the activity. Give the participant who volunteers a bucket of balls.
2. Have the participant stand right over the empty bucket and drop a ball into it. Then ask the participant to begin moving a little farther away and toss another ball into the bucket. Ask the participant to continue to move away until s/he begins to doubt that s/he can toss the ball into the bucket successfully.
3. Ask what the participant is experiencing. Then have the participant move closer until s/he feels confident again. Ask how the participant feels now and have him/her toss a few more balls into the bucket.
4. Encourage the participant to move farther away again and try to take the feelings of confidence with him/her.
5. Give each participant a bucket of balls and an empty bucket and have them go through the exercise individually or divide the class into pairs or small groups and have PLAYers take turns.

This exercise also can be conducted on the putting green; start with a six-inch putt, and then move progressively farther from the hole.