

anyone who knows me knows that i take my job very seriously. i don't think i will ever be comfortable with the term "coach" - there is too much baggage, weight i am not sure i am competent to shoulder. i am a trainer. i help people train behavior. i am a manipulator. a sounding board. a watchful eye. an adviser. a bridge. above all i am a communicator. my job is to understand - to assess the individual, their relationship to their goals and to the work. to push and pull, to bribe, bully, cajole, and coddle. to get it done. by any means necessary.

too often people look at the term "by any means necessary" as an excuse to use the big sticks in the arsenal. to yell at clients, "tough love", threats and admonitions. trainers think that they are being edgy and raw - being "real". we often say that if the only tool you have is a hammer than every problem starts to look like a nail - well if you keep swing that hammer long enough and loudly enough than the only problems that will seek you out will be nails - and then what? will you declare that you found the secret? i mean, how could you be wrong? it has worked every time...

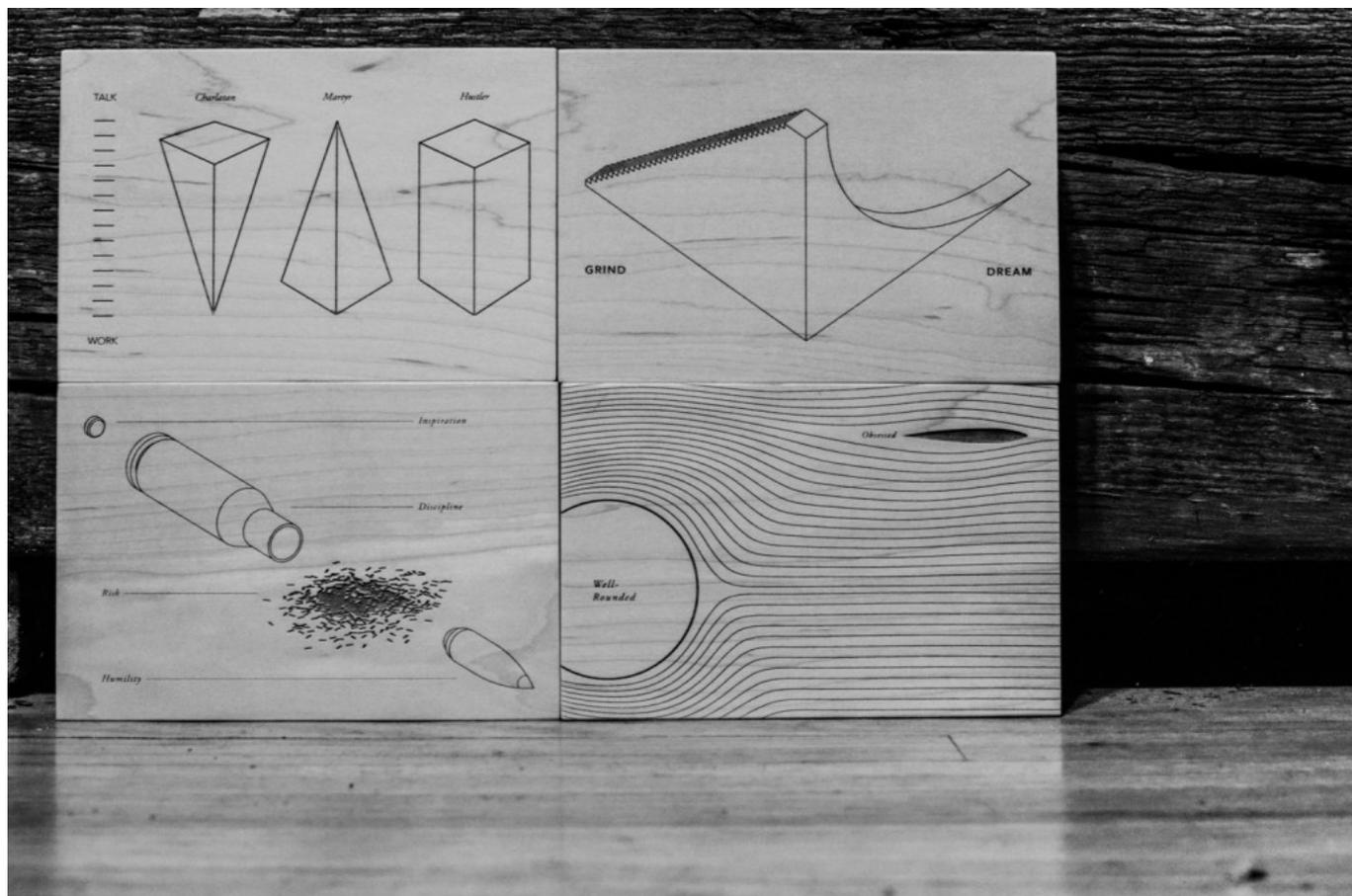
training. proper, meaningful training requires knowledge and compassion. it requires trust and timing. some people need a shove, others need a helping hand. most people need both at very specific times and if you shove someone when they need a hand than you have lost - more than that you have failed as a trainer. you misread the signs, or worse yet - never bothered to look for them in the first place. the largest piece of advice i give to people beginning down the path as trainers is to never believe your own bullshit. in entering into this relationship your client is handing you the keys to their psyche, trusting you to root around in there, lie and manipulate, orchestrate events to a specific end - they are making themselves extremely vulnerable and that is not something i am going to be cavalier about, and it is something that really, really upsets me when i see it.

your measure as a trainer is the effectiveness you have on your clients. if you seek out clients to fit your brand - then you are a talent scout, and there is nothing wrong with that - just be honest about it. we all have our strengths, other trainers in my gym, guys who i once taught have gotten more out of some of my former clients than i ever could. they saw things i didn't, touched people in ways i could not. or maybe the clients in question simply needed a new guide for the next part of their journey - maybe by getting them from *a* to *b* i blocked myself from being useful from *b* to *c*. the point is that this is a process, and to be effective we as instructors must know our place.

too many fuckups in this world can be traced back to peoples failure to recognize conditions they are placing on their solutions. the self styled coaches who put their own ego in front of their clients success. the student who asks questions because they crave the attention of their teacher, not because they actually want the information. the fighter who is more interested in being seen as dominant than actually being victorious. we all want to win, but for some people (and at some times) it is just as important to be seen winning.

an important thing to note if you are choosing to train others is that you will be heaping all your bullshit onto someone elses life. your biases, your hangups, your random errant thoughts. you will talk and they will listen, you might even help people change for the better. the thing to remember is to never believe your own bullshit. in this era of broadcast media you can scream your advice into the void - swing your hammer with abandon and think you are actually changing the world for the better - you may have even gotten a thank you e-mail, and how can you argue with that? our successes reach out to us but what about the ones we push when they need to be reeled-in? it is so easy to forget that through these screens we are speaking to individuals - people who span the full gradient of position and temperament. it is easy to ignore someones situation, to forget that we probably have no clue about where they are coming from or even what they are working towards. what their specific issues may be. advice like "go harder" might make you feel good to yell but is it really what that person needs to hear? and if you can not honestly answer that question then why are you speaking in the first place? do you want to help - or do you want to be *seen as helpful*?

silence is better than bullshit - and self-serving maneuvers, conscious or not are the surest way to break trust. never forget that the client is the important one. that was the deal. "i will help you until we achieve your goals or you find someone better" - and for some clients i have actively tried to find "someone better" - the point is that it all starts with getting to know someone. with openness and honesty and a healthy dose of humility. everyone will tell you what they need, but first you have to shut the fuck up and listen.



*understand your contributions. understand your cost. grind and dream - but understand how they change over time. mind your drag, and realize that value is a situational judgement. realize that a tiny amount of mass, a spark of inspiration, a small amount of energy, immense focus, impeccable timing, and perfect accuracy give you one chance and permanent change.*  
*i am in it for the poetry... mostly.*