

Summary of Notes from Mastery by George Leonard

At the recommendation of some fellow coaches, I picked up a used copy of this book from Amazon. My takeaways:

1. Mastery brings rich rewards, yet it is not really a goal or a destination but rather a process, a journey.
2. Developing new skills starts with baby steps.
3. With the introduction of each new stage of development, you are going to have to start thinking again, which means things will temporarily fall apart.
4. To take the master's journey, you have to practice diligently, striving to hone your skills to attain new levels of competence. You also have to be willing to spend most of your time on a plateau, so keep practicing even when you seem to be getting nowhere. (This is familiar to me as ascending "S curves")
5. Practice primarily for the sake of practice itself.
6. The quick fix, anti-mastery mentality touches almost everything in our lives. (reiterated only recently in a book I read, Deep Work) "We learned the perils of getting ahead of ourselves, and now we're willing to stay on a plateau for as long as was necessary. Ambition still was there, but it was tame. Once again, we enjoyed our training. We loved the plateau. And as an aside, we made progress."
7. The five keys to mastery are instruction, practice, surrender, intentionality, and the edge.
8. John Wooden maintained an approximate 50-50 ratio between reinforcement and correction, with exceptional enthusiasm on both sides of the equation.
9. The masterful teacher is one who discovers how to involve each student actively in the process of learning.
10. At the heart of it, mastery is practiced. Mastery is staying on the path.
11. Intentionality fuels the master's journey. Every master is a master of vision.
12. Mastery is not about perfection. It's about a process, a journey.
13. Be willing to negotiate with your resistance to change.
14. Honor but don't indulge your dark side.
15. To be a learner, you've got to be willing to be a fool.
16. Are you willing to wear your white belt?

Conclusion: An excellent book and reminder.