

# THE ONE HOUR BREAKTHROUGH



TRANSLATING ASPIRATION INTO ACTION

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## Opening Remarks

I have been an adventurer in the field of human endeavor for the past 30 years. I have been curious, fascinated, intrigued and at times engrossed by the side of human nature which strives for and demonstrates inspired performance. My profession is to consult executives and their organizations to achieve *Breakthroughs*, unprecedented accomplishments that redefine what is possible for the organization and for people.

An executive, with whom I had worked for several years, asked me to speak on *Breakthrough* at his annual convening of the top 100 members of his organization.

What could I say in one hour that might make a difference? I was not interested in an inspirational talk that would only serve to raise people's emotional energy temporarily. I have always been compelled to impart lasting value ... insights, perspectives and stories that stick like velcro to people and affect their thinking, actions, performance and their lives.

Preparing for that talk and appreciating the wonderful reception that I have received over the years from people around the world encouraged me to write this book. My hope is that some of the ideas stick like velcro to you, contribute to your performance in life and contribute to your life being a great performance.

I wrote this book in the casual style of you and I having a conversation. I want you to have the experience of me speaking with you. During the next hour or so, we will explore this idea of *Breakthrough*, which you can apply to any area of your life.

I have one request and I make it for your personal benefit. Don't just read *The One Hour Breakthrough* as you would an ordinary book. PLAY it as a game ... along with me. Sitting back ... being a spectator will not be particularly valuable for you. If however, you really PLAY, you will have fun and you will learn something of real and immediate use, as contrasted with learning something informational.

Doug Berger



## The Breakthrough Game

We're going to start by thinking of *Breakthrough* in the spirit and framework of a game. Countless people have found that changing their point of view ... trying on a new perspective ... can be life altering.

### Why a Game?

Quick ... GAME ... What are you thinking?  
What are you feeling?

Fun	Amusement	Play	Sports
Competition			
Adventure	Testing my skill		
Winning			
A Game Plan	Involving other people		

Now, think WORK ...

Think TASK ...

Think CHALLENGE ....

We approach every situation in our lives with a particular frame of reference, and that frame shapes how we feel ... what we think and even how we see things. Change the frame and different feelings, different thinking and different perceptions naturally come along. I use the phrasing “come along” deliberately. Change your frame of reference and THE NEW will naturally and spontaneously emerge.

## **Winning and Succeeding**

The first aspect of any game is **Winning**. Just ask my children. My son’s little league team aimed at winning the town world series, and they did just that. My daughter aimed to be a top finisher in a gymnastics competition and she did just that. Winning in *Breakthrough* is accomplishing an ambition ... achieving something you deeply desire.

Winning is not the end all and be all. **What?!** You heard me right - winning is not the end all and be all - winning is just winning. Sometimes we make winning everything. People who make winning everything, are often very dissatisfied and emotionally unfulfilled. Orson Welles in the movie *Citizen Kane*, lies on

his death-bed having won at life, but is revealed to be a deeply unhappy person, still longing for 'Rosebud', his childhood toy sled.

We expend a lot of time, effort, emotion and energy in accomplishing things. If the only thing that matters while we work at advancing our ambition is winning, then there is no experience of satisfaction along the way. Even achieving our goal becomes hollow and empty. We achieve something important (that promotion ... that big sale, that new relationship). "I won!" Having arrived, we are elated. ... for a fleeting moment. Then, in the very next moment, comes the letdown. Winning is temporary. Tying your emotional fulfillment to winning makes your personal satisfaction temporary.

Succeeding on the other hand is an entirely different phenomenon. Succeeding is all about the journey and having great, fulfilling experiences along the way. If it takes a little longer to achieve your future ... so what? It doesn't really matter ... you are living a great life ... you are content ... fulfilled ... satisfied, while moving your life in the direction of your aspirations.

IMAGINE this ... you wake up in the morning and you're already turned on ... fired up ... by your bold, ambitious future. What would life be like if you went through your day like that? What would your life be like if your everyday actions and experiences fulfilled you before you ever achieved that future?

## **The Playing Field**

In order to play a game you need a playing field. There are different playing fields everywhere in our lives. If you are a tennis player, your playing field is the tennis court. If you are an actress, your playing field is the stage. If you are a skier/snow boarder your playing field is the mountain slope. In *Breakthrough*, we also have a playing field ... it's called *YOUR LIFE*.

You might want to have a *Breakthrough* in business ... the playing field is Your Life. You might want to have a *Breakthrough* in your weight ... the playing field is Your Life. You might want to have a *Breakthrough* with your children ... the playing field is still Your Life.

**Why?** No matter where you are in your life, you are the same person everywhere. You may act differently depending on the setting, but you are still the same person. You want to take advantage of everything in your life in order to make **The Breakthrough Game** work for you.

Often times, we compartmentalize life and say, “This is my business life,” and “This is my social life,” and “This is my family life,” and “This is my financial life.” In *Breakthrough*, the playing field is your *whole* life and I want you to take advantage of the entire playing field. Like a soccer team, if you only play down the center of the field, you are missing the opportunity for all of the moves on the sides of the field. You can never be a great team, or have a great life, if you fail to take advantage of your entire playing field.

## **The Rules**

Games have rules, and in *The Breakthrough Game* there are two rules.

**Rule #1: You make up the rules.**

Have you noticed that there are people who seem to be playing by a different set of rules in life? There are people who have different priorities ... people who have very different ways of approaching their family ... career ... finances ... relationships.

This suggests something fundamental about rules.

**My rules are not THE rules.**

People build their personal list of rules, and those rules define the allowable moves on their playing field. Rules define what you can do or must do.

Earlier in my life, one of my rules was “act smart.” So, I would be in a social situation and I would find an occasion to “act smart.” I would be in a business meeting and “act smart.” I used to get very annoyed with people when they didn’t appreciate just how ‘smart’ I was. My personal rule really limited me. It didn’t allow me to learn from others. It created distance between me and other people. I couldn’t use the

entire playing field of my life either for winning or for success until I truly appreciated that my rule wasn't **THE** rule.

What is one of your rules?

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**Rule #2: You make up the limits.**

The play of your game is also determined by what you cannot do. “Don’t take risks.” “Don’t look foolish” “Don’t show your emotions.”

“Oh ... someone else could probably do that, but ‘not me’.” In *The Breakthrough Game* ... you’re the one who made up that limit.

As a child, I used to play a great deal of tennis. I loved the game of tennis and I loved playing tennis with my dad, who was a ranked player in his youth. As I grew older, I began to get frustrated with my game. I would be very close to winning and then I would snatch defeat from the hands of victory. This started to become a pattern. I began to intellectually and emotionally experience defeat before it ever

happened. I began to lose my love of the sport. Then, one day I beat my dad in tennis for the first time. A real WOW experience for me. I won! Something remarkable began to happen after that. I began to win many of my games.

Reflecting back on that experience through the lens of breakthrough, I realized that I had been programming myself. I went into every game against my Dad with the limit, “I can’t win.” It was no surprise that I consistently lost. That one winning game began to break up my own programming.

People are widely conditioned to look elsewhere for explanations of their limitations. You do so at your own peril. As soon as you place the limits outside of yourself, you forfeit the opportunity to play *The Breakthrough Game*.

It is only with these rules that you can truly be the author of your life. If you are not the author of your life ... NO Breakthrough. Only through playing by these rules can you succeed in and win at *The Breakthrough Game*.

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