

# National Coaching Philosophy

**Better Coaches = Better Persons = Better Athletes**



# Purpose and Goals

To develop golfers who are **adaptable and robust under pressure**, have a genuine **love for the game** (i.e., intrinsic motivation), and **exhibit character** both on and off the course.

## Adaptable & Robust Under Pressure

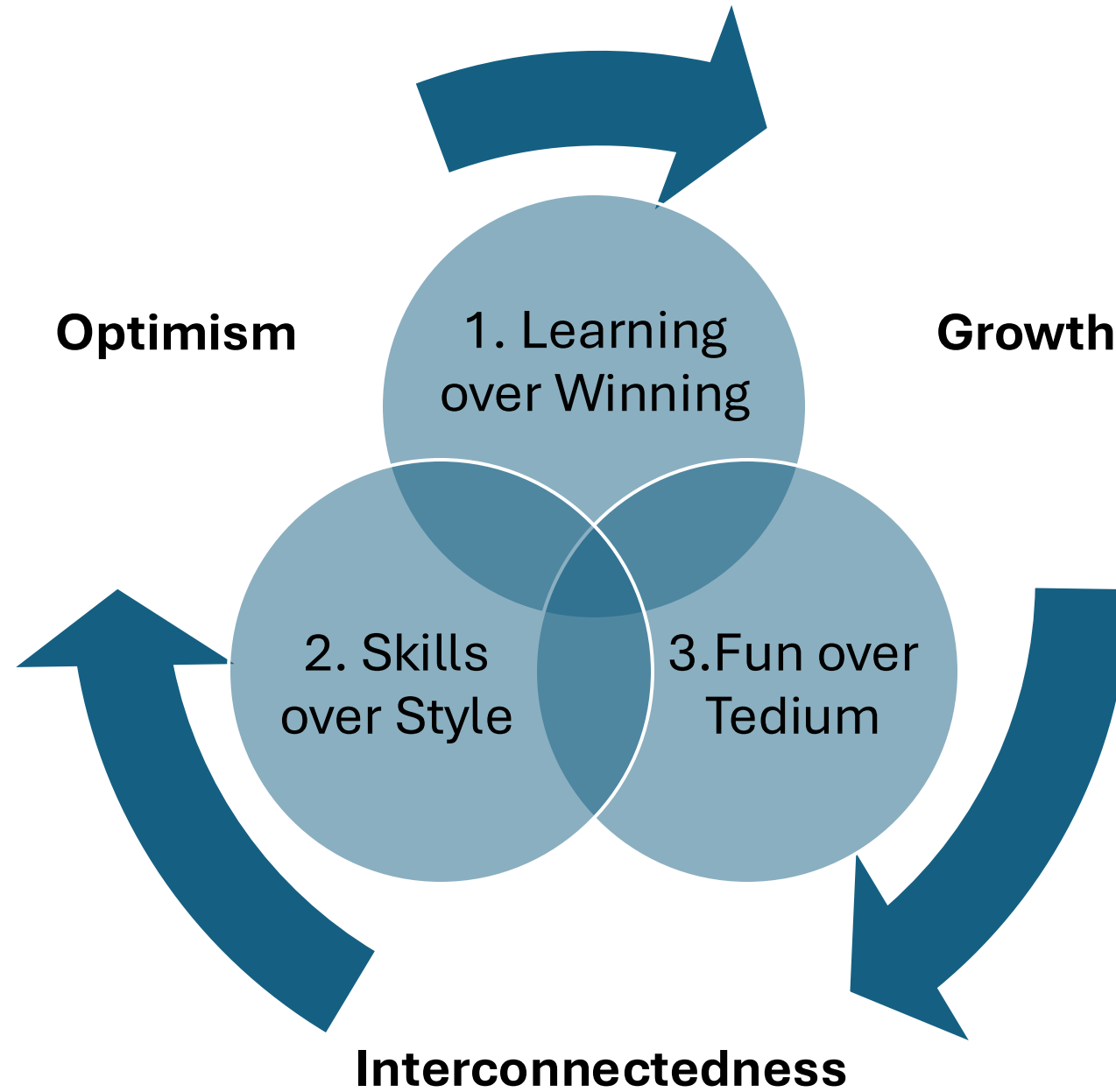
Competition occurs in dynamic and pressurizing conditions. Coaches aim to develop golfers who can adapt their skills in different environments (e.g., course conditions, weather) while maintaining their performance levels under competitive pressure.

## Love for the Game

Coaches ought to develop golfers who are not only extrinsically motivated but intrinsically motivated to train and thrive in Golf long term. We can do this by ensuring that they are not overwhelmed by challenges or bored by repetitions,

## Character

Golf's emphasis on honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, and self-discipline amidst the challenges of the game provides an ideal context for coaches to help their students foster character development and life skills.



# Core Values

## Interconnectedness

- Recognize the **relationships and connections between various stakeholders** (e.g., NSA and parents) involved in the development of athletes.
- Acknowledge the value of **sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices between coaches.**

## Growth

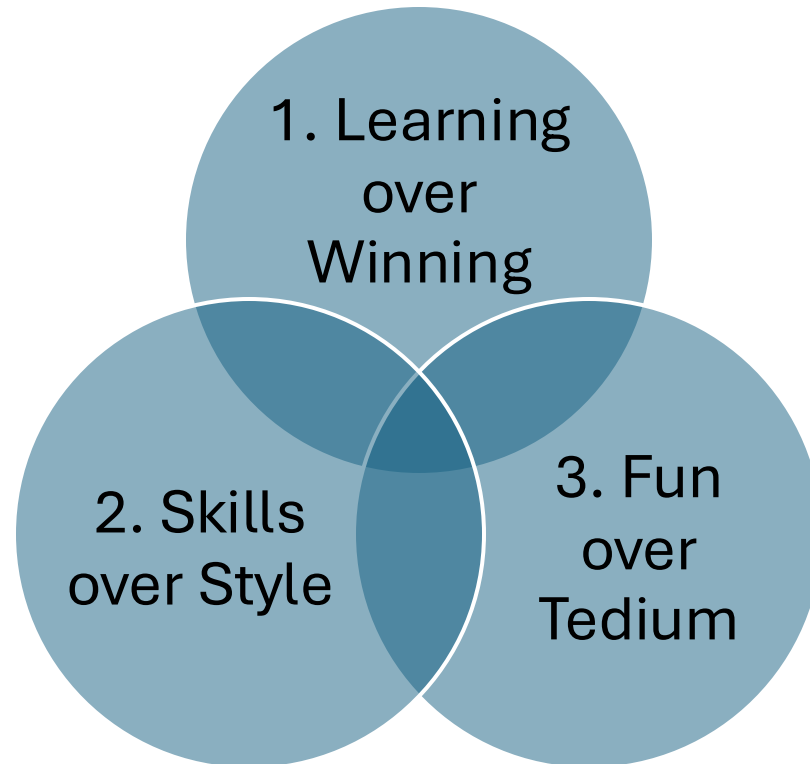
- A commitment to continuous development of **professional** (i.e., coaching pedagogy), **interpersonal** (i.e., relational), and **intrapersonal** (i.e., capacity for introspection and reflection) skills (Côté & Gilbert, 2009)

## Optimism

- A focus on **finding solutions and leveraging strengths**, even in challenging situations (e.g., lack of course access, NS commitments) situations, rather than dwelling on problems or limitations.

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

These attributes (from the previous slide) are achieved through **developmentally appropriate practices** (particularly for the youth level) and supported by **SGA's key coaching principles of 'Learning over Winning', 'Skills over Swings', and 'Fun over Tedium'**.



# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 1. Learning over Winning

“Why waste time proving over and over how great you are when you could be getting better?” — Carol S. Dweck

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 1. Learning over Winning

Golfers with a ‘mastery mindset’ tend to **focus on learning and improvement**. They are more likely to **embrace challenges** and **foster character traits such as grit and resilience**.

Meanwhile, those with a ‘winning mindset’ would **prioritize outcomes and proving themselves** and are more likely to avoid challenges (e.g., avoid competitions to maintain rankings) and be limited by **performance anxiety**.

Dweck (2006) emphasizes **the importance of fostering a learning or mastery mindset for long-term success and character development**.

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 1. Learning over Winning

Strategies that coaches can adopt to support the learning or mastery mindset include:

- Breaking down training outcomes into bite-sized process goals (Locke & Latham, 2013)
- Adopt a more facilitative (instead of directive) style of coaching (Côté & Gilbert, 2009)
- Providing feedback and positive reinforcement based on effort and progress, rather than outcomes (Dweck, 2006).
- Role-model the Growth Mindset and teach Golfers about the Growth and Fixed Mindset (Dweck, 2006).





# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 2. Skills over Swings

“If we believe that **skill involves adaptability and having multiple movement solutions**, then our practice activities must reflect that.”

— Graeme McDowell, Co-author of ‘A Constraints-Led Approach to Golf Coaching’

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 2. Skills over Swings

**Golf is played under dynamic and demanding conditions** where players must constantly adapt to varying environments (e.g., course conditions, weather) and competitive pressure. Consequently, **an overemphasis on block practice to develop the “perfect” swing in a stable environment** (often at the range) would conflict with the reality of the sport.

To develop skillful players who can adapt according to the moment’s needs, coaches need to **create training environments that resemble the challenges and demands faced during competition.**

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 2. Skills over Swings

According to Renshaw et al. (2021), coaching practices informed by concepts such as ‘repetition without repetition’, implicit learning, representative learning design, and the constraints-led approach would **promote deeper learning and transfer of skills to actual performance contexts**. Examples include:

1. Adapting course conditions and game rules to simulate real-game scenarios, pressure, and according to the needs (i.e., areas for development) of the golfer.
2. Introduce variability during range practice by having golfers work on various skills or skill variations within a session, such as aiming for different targets or simulating scenarios resembling those encountered on actual courses.
3. Allowing golfers to explore making decisions without the fear of making mistakes, and with minimal instructions from the coach.

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 3. Fun over Tedium

“The Essence of Sport is to Have FUN!”

— Michael Jordan

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 3. Fun over Tedium

Fun or enjoyment is the number one reason why kids participate in sports (Gardner et al., 2017)! It is also common for athletes to describe their best performance as one in which they had the most fun!

When an activity is enjoyable, individuals are more likely to be **intrinsically motivated** which in turn **sustains long-term engagement**.

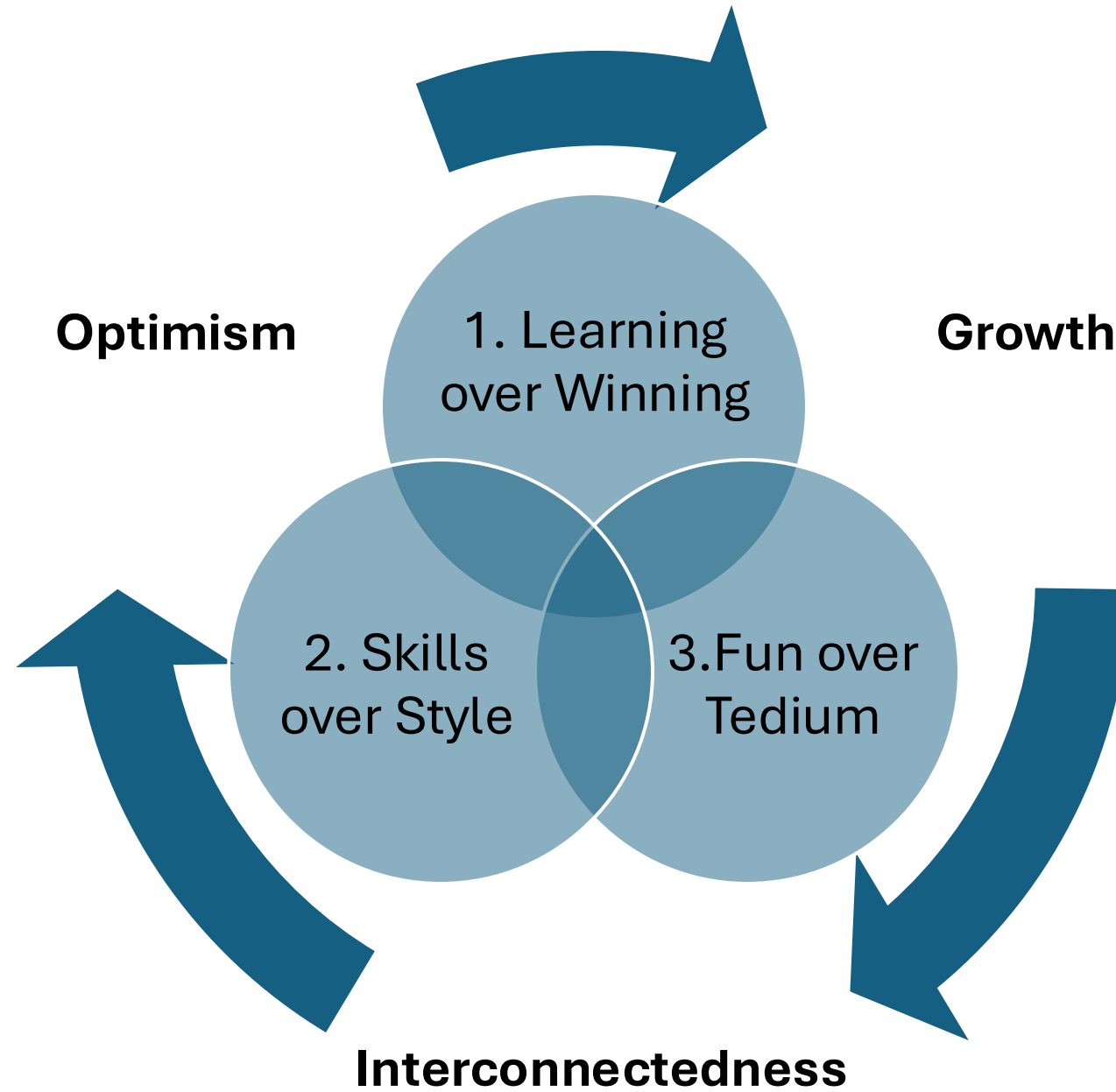
Granted that not every aspect of practice or sport can be enjoyable, **the absence of fun increases the feeling of effort, and completing any practice becomes a more challenging and energy-draining process.**

# 3 Related Coaching Principles

## 3. Fun over Tedium

Besides introducing new activities to prevent boredom and monotony, coaches can create practice environments that are enjoyable and foster intrinsic motivation through practices supported by the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000):

1. Provide appropriately challenging tasks that promote a sense of competence.
2. Allowing athletes some autonomy in decision-making.
3. Creating a supportive and inclusive environment where athletes feel valued and connected



# References:

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