

The Primrose Path
(Lead them to the place where you want to kill them)
by
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A. Know yourself

I. Range: You have to know your ranges. These will determine plans and responses.

1. Long range: this is the first response zone. Actions done in this zone can be multifaceted.
2. medium range: This zone cuts down the response time that your opponent has. Attacks from this zone are often a major commitment on the part of the opponent.
3. Short range: This is the do or die zone. The advantage is they have no time to react. The disadvantage If you miss or make a mistake there is very rarely room to recover.
4. Note the ranges move with you. You can train this by marking your ranges and practicing hits.

II. Techniques: You can not set some one up if you can not perform the necessary action.

a. Offense: You have to know what you can throw at each zone. Not all shots can be thrown at all zones. Cuts can become slaps or thrust can be excessive depending on the zone.

b. Defense: Precision in foot work and parries is a must. You have to be good enough with these tools. Your defense steers the fight.

III. Pitfalls: Some of the fallacies that can interfere with performance.

a. Speed: Speed is a function of practice and familiarity. People often think they are faster than their opponent. Well there is always some one faster. Timing is often mistaken for speed. A proper sense of timing will beat speed.

b. Over estimating your skill level. Nothing will get you beat faster. Skill is only developed through practice. Talent will only take you so far.

c. Under or over estimating your opponent. In order to control the fight you have to know what the opponent can do. Be realistic about it. Look with a unbiased eye.

- B. Know the opponent. Your opponent will reveal themselves in how they move and carry themselves.
 - I. Off the field. A fencer will do certain things to prepare. Warm ups stretching or nothing.
 - a. Stretching: will often reveal the range the fencer is capable of reaching.
 - b. Warm ups: If the bout that will let you know about how people fight. It will also let you know about the intensity that some one will fight with. Warning this does not work with everybody.
 - II. On the field: If you really want to know what they do look to the field it is all there. Investigate by fencing them and watching them.
 - a. Patterns: Fighters often fall into patterns that work for them. We all do it.
 - b. Range: If you watch you will see where they are comfortable and uncomfortable.
 - c. Pressing: Look at how they react under pressure.
 - d. Space: Look at what they do when ground is given to them.
 - e. Mental stance. What is there attitude when they fight.
 - 1. Earth- unmoving Hold your ground and destroy.
 - 2. fire- quick explosive attacks
 - 3. water- what ever you do they seem to be ready for it. Your attack was sent right back into you.(drowning in the technique)
 - 4. wind- they were not where they were supposed to be. Hit from any and all directions.
 - 5. Void- the flow between technique from one to the other. Can also be seen as the mode where the space between thought and action seems to be non existant.
- C. Mental and physical methods of paving the road. As With most things there is no real separation between the two.
 - I. Mental The goal is to set your opponent into uncomfortable position. You are trying to control the fight and the pace at witch it occurs.
 - a. Setting the pattern: Get your opponent into a pattern using foot work or blades once they are set into the pattern brake it. Make sure they are really set into the pattern.
 - b. Take away: Find out what they do then take it away. If they are a long range fighter force them to in fight. If they do a lot of blade control. Do not engage blades.

- c. The gift: Let them think they have the upper hand. Once you start this process you have to know where you want it to end. So you can maneuver them into position.
- d. frustration: Find out what bothers them and do it. Ex. just parry or move out of the way. When you see the frustration take over they are in position.

II. Physical

- a. Timing- Picking the right moment to strike or move
- b. Varying speed- Often changing the speed will allow you to hit.
- c. Feints- Sell the hit get them to react, hit after the block is thrown. You can also sell a hit to one area then shift to another. The feint must be total convincing.
- d. Disengage- A semicircular move to change lines that goes under the bell. Most people can block one, this factors down when you use it multiple times in rapid succession.
- e. Coupe'- A line change over the top of the bell.
- f. Foot work
 - 1. Body voids-step out of the way in the right time.
 - 2. Slipping the shot-a step that puts you inside the strikes range.
 - 3. Tempo changes- change the rhythm of your foot work.
 - 4. Stepping fade- Stepping back as you parry a strong attack (charge) to the side. Move back in pace with the attack. Match the speed. It has to be a major all out attack. If it isn't they will see what you are doing. Your hit comes as you are moving back.
- g. Stance work
 - 1. Stance fades- a weight shift that takes you from a fore ward stance to a back stance.
 - 2. Invitations: offer a line to your opponent so that they will attack. This is a feint with your stance. You have to be subtle, all you need is a little opening. This is meant to distract your opponent from the real threat, and put them in the proper position. Plan out your reaction ahead of time.

D. Planning

- a. Tailor your plan to the opponent. This is applying all of the intelligence that you gathered on them.
1. Feel out your opponent to get a reaction and plan accordingly.
- b. Take your time and make sure the trap is set.
- c. Once you have control, end it. This is a time game the longer you spend playing the more chances you give your opponent.
- d. Think ahead Two or three moves.