

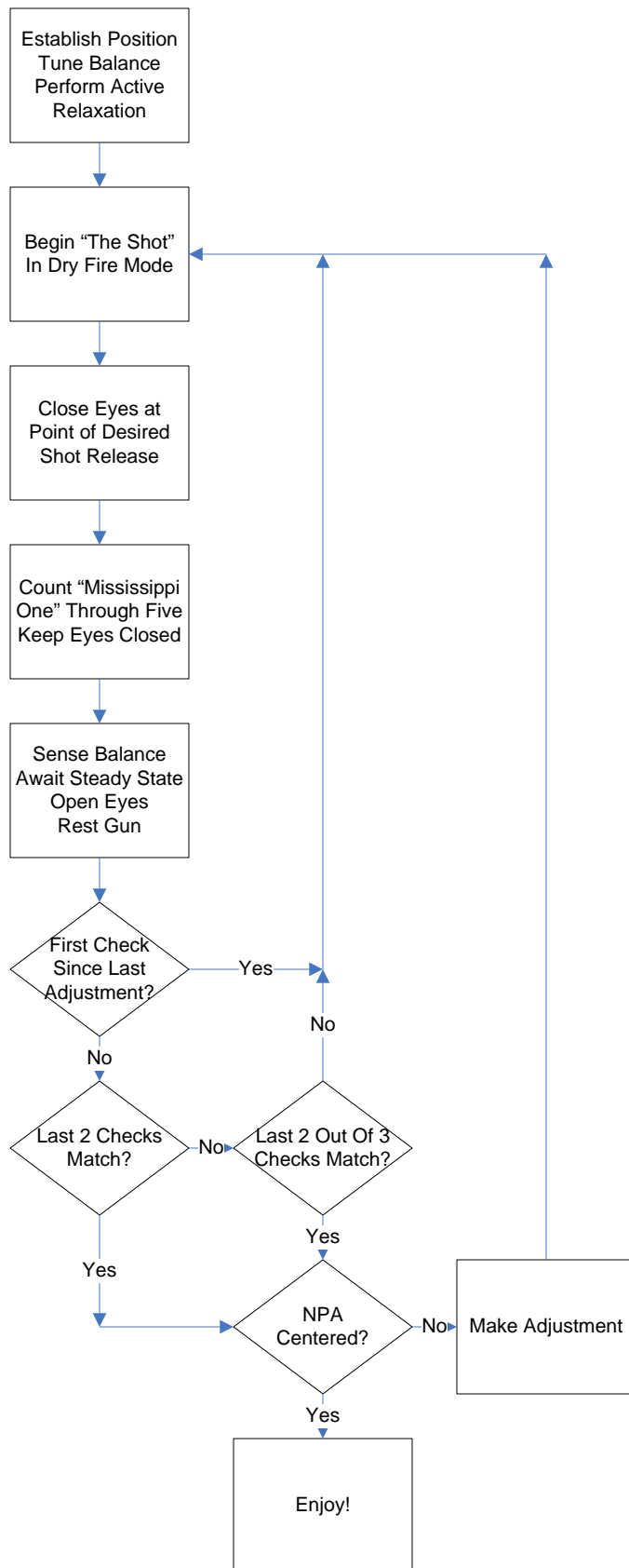
Yoda's NPA Routine

1. Establish Position & Relax Body, Mind, Spirit
 - a. (many things here)
2. Sense and Tune Balance
 - a. (many things here)
3. Determine and Adjust NPA
 - a. Begin complete (dry) shot process (Use "The Shot") – exactly as if shooting (lungs at normal exhale point for entire process, whether shooting or doing NPA)
 - b. At point where shot would be released, close eyes
 - c. Count "Mississippi One..." through "Mississippi Five" – keep eyes closed
 - d. Sense balance and wait for steady state
 - e. Only now may you open your eyes, note where gun is pointed – make no adjustment
 - f. Place gun in rest position
 - g. Repeat all previous steps (a. through f.) a second time
 - h. If both checks point at same spot – make adjustment and start completely over (steps a. through g.)
 - i. If checks point at two different spots, do third check (steps a. through f.) – should match one of first two checks – make adjustment and start completely over (steps a. through g.)
 - j. Repeat entire process (a. through i.) over and over until gun "wants" to point at exact center of aiming mark

At first, or when rushed or tired, this seems like a lot of work. As the athlete learns this process and as their awareness of inner position, balance, and NPA grows, it becomes second nature and goes much faster and is much more accurate. For 12 bull targets, establish NPA on top bull, and develop a way to work down the column that provides accurate NPA without the long checking process.

There are many, many other ways to check and adjust NPA. None are as accurate. Establish NPA using any other method. Then immediately do it this way. If the other way matches, I want to know the method! So far, none has been found that is as accurate. Having NPA out where the shot would score 9.5 isn't even close.

Why bother making NPA that exact? If 1) the position is physiologically sound and provides a true (not perceived, but a true) solid foundation, and if 2) the balance has been thoroughly sensed and tuned, and if 3) NPA is adjusted so that the gun wants to point at exactly the center of the aiming mark, and if 4) the athlete thinks of "hold" as a noun rather than as a verb (that is, allows the gun to settle and point instead of actively working to "hold" it still), and if 5) the athlete is in the proper frame of mind to perform, then the gun will come down on the area of aim and actually appear to stop. Seemingly effortless strings of excellent shots are the result. Athletes report that they can tell when they have all the elements in place because the hold shrinks to a much smaller and slower movement compared to what they usually see and that the gun often and reliably seems to stop right on the correct area of aim.



Yoda's NPA Routine		
Copyright 2005 JP O'Connor	24 Aug 2005	jpoc@acm.org

Only this NPA routine has proven to allow alignment of where the gun wants to point (NPA) with where we want it to point (target) to the degree of accuracy demanded by the sport. If a faster routine with the same accuracy appears to be found, please tell me so that we can explore it!

If the two points (NPA and target center) are off, even if only by a few millimeters, the hold will be much less steady than it could be and needs to be. If the two points are the same, the gun will often come down on the area of aim and seem to stop right on center, if the athlete is treating "hold" as a noun and not as a verb. Athletes often report being able to discern a profound difference whenever Position, Balance, Relaxation, and NPA are truly accomplished and optimized together.

Permission is granted to distribute FREE copies for non-profit educational purposes provided the article is kept unedited in its entirety with all notices, copyright, and other information contained in the document. Any other use requires advance, specific, written permission from the author. The author may be contacted at jpoc@acm.org.

Based in the Atlanta, Ga., area, JP O'Connor (email: jpoc@acm.org and blog: <http://jpoconnor.wordpress.com/>) is involved in shooting as a competitor, official, and coach. He is a former Assistant National Coach – USA Paralympics Shooting Team and ISSF Judge, serves on the National Coach Development Staff in both rifle & pistol, and is Coach Emeritus of the NCAA rifle and intercollegiate pistol teams at the University of North Georgia. He enjoys working with a number of pistol and rifle athletes and junior club teams from around the country, ranging from beginners to the highly advanced, in training sessions, clinics, and one-on-one private coaching. Previous installments of this series, additional resources, and book suggestions may be found at <http://www.pilkguns.com/jparticles/jpcontents.htm> and via his blog at <http://jpoconnor.wordpress.com/>. Email questions and suggestions to jpoc@acm.org.

Links:

“High Performance Olympic Target Shooting” blog, books, and additional resources
<http://jpoconnor.wordpress.com/>

“On The Firing Line” article series and additional resources
<http://www.pilkguns.com/jparticles/jpcontents.htm>