

## SIX GAMES TO GLORY

A Winning Strategy for the 1995 South African Springbok Team

Prepared for Coach Kitch Christie by Dr. Don Beck

This document will focus specifically on the Hearts & Minds aspect of high performance for an athletic team. This body of knowledge will compliment both physical training and fitness and the Technique & Tactics functions in team preparation and performance. While all of these skills and components are interrelated, the intent, here, will be to look at team behavior through the perspectives of Hearts & Minds technology.

Basic purpose: To get each player and coach/manager to PEAK and the team to PRIME - a condition, mindset, and level of performance that puts the team into a highly competitive ZONE at the beginning and during the entire course of the game. These ideas are tailored for a team in the midst of preparation for top level performance such as the Super Bowl or World Cup.

Characteristics:

1. This will be a total package designed to begin on Monday, May 15 and run through the completion of the World Cup on June 24, 1995 with a victory in the Rugby finals. This will reflect a total systems approach to the Six Games to Glory theme and will pull out all the stops. Some of the ideas may be too foreign and strange but I decided to define the "whole ball of wax."
2. The theoretical concepts and practical actions will be adapted for Springbok STAFF and PLAYERS.
3. Much of these material will be new to South African Rugby but reflect years of study and application in the United States and elsewhere.
4. This will be an initial statement of the Hearts & Minds initiative and plan. It will require more amplification and explanation before I leave the country on 19 May.
5. While many of these ideas will address the long-term enhancement of Hearts & Minds in South African rugby (to complement the development in the sports sciences and medicine,) this document will describe **WHAT CAN BE DONE NOW WITH THE WORLD CUP JUST AHEAD -- starting Monday!**

6. Some of these concepts and methods are used by team leadership in directly influencing and impacting the team; others require heavy involvement by the players to self-generate or take ownership themselves; while yet others require close interaction between and among everybody.

#### Basic Assumptions:

1. Human nature -- either expressed as individuals or in groups -- is an open system. As a result, value systems ebb and flow, concentration and energy levels wax and wane, and performance capacities increase and decrease. In short, there are no permanent types or traits -- nor can stability be assumed as a given. In all cases the erratic and often unpredictable laws and processes of chaos/order prevail.

2. Athletic coaches and administrators in general and South African rugby officials in specific are often wary of anything "psychological." Some fear loss of control of athletes. Some believe it's all airy-fairy and that real men can motivate themselves. Others have been burned by naive "psychological" theories and quick-fix solutions that did not go down well with athletes. Yet others have out-of-date understanding of the mind game, even though most will tell you the game is a certain percent "mental." Finally, many in the coaching business are a bit fearful of psychological interventions because they don't yet have their own internal worlds well-integrated.

3. Note these words of caution:

\* Beware of the mirror distortion -- i. e. the tendency to project one's own preferences for motivation etc. on the players who may respond to totally different impulses and procedures. "They" are not like you.

What THEY need should prevail over what YOU like/want for them. 1995 rugby players, even from the Afrikaner tradition, are no longer "yes sir" obedient followers who are caught up in the sacrifice self mindset that characterized Springboks in the glory years. Their value systems are changing radically and can only respond to more modern and sophisticated learning and motivational packages. I've observed this major transformation over the last 15 years.

The entire business sector is shifting to "self-managed" teams and away from docile, passive "hired hands." Same in sport. Yet, it would be foolish to believe that every player -- and even the team - - have the necessary understanding and skills to motivate self. In

the age of personal empowerment, though, coaches should find ways to directly involve players in decision-making (where they have knowledge and competency) -- especially when it comes to the creation and maintenance of PEAK and PRIME.

- \* Beware of leaving some critical stones unturned because the idea is new and different. 1995 is not 1992 - 1950 - nor 1937. New thinking about athletic performance is coming from such countries as Australia, the United States etc. RSA HAS been in a time warp. Just as rugby strategies have had to change -- so must the MIND GAME. Failure to make this quantum-leap in thinking may keep South African rugby from returning to international dominance.
  
- \* Beware of single cause-effect thinking that claims that a single variable CAUSED or did not CAUSE the desired effect. Human behavior is simply too complex. We are dealing, here, with the formation of a "critical mass" in a team's chemistry that cannot be explained nor created by mechanistic thinking. The design of PRIME is a holistic problem and condition meaning one must deal with multiple variables simultaneously. Even then, nothing is ever certain -- nor can it be identified and measured "scientifically." One cannot CAUSE the shift into ZONE. One can only up the capacities and potentials of a individual players (PEAK) and the team as a whole (PRIME). Yet, the single bounce of the ball, the half-step quickness of a player, the extra amount of force in a specific scrum -- these isolated and seemingly insignificant events -- often make the difference as the entire momentum shifts from one side to the other.

#### Organization of Document:

- I. An operational definition of the Hearts & Minds Game - reaching and maintaining PEAK, PRIME and ZONE.
- II. Preparing for and Playing the Hearts & Minds Game.
- III. A specific formula, process, and schedule for the 1995 World Cup.

#### I. PEAK, PRIME AND ZONE -- THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS IN PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER.

PEAK refers to the level and condition of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual functioning that an individual athlete achieves. While the staff can influence this process a little, this

depends largely on the will, discipline, and know-how of the individual athlete. While there are some general principles that cut across all athletes, each will have his own way of reaching PEAK.

By PRIME we mean the level of preparation of both the individual and the team. This includes a number of trademarks that should describe the Springboks -- including players, coaches, management and support staff -- and even Rugby Union officials and administrators. This includes, also, the fans - the wives/significant others -- and everybody who impacts the players while in preparation and in game conditions. The focus, here, will be on the 26-man team and especially the 15 who take the field in each of the Six Games. Starting on Monday, the idea will be to get the entire team into PRIME.

P - THOROUGH PREPARATION -- Physical condition -- Knowledge of opponent and understanding of game plan  
-- Technique & Tactics.

R - RESPONSIVENESS -- Capacity to respond to new challenges, adverse conditions, and shifting strategies during the games. Requires high levels of communication, trust, resiliency, openness, and flexibility.

I - INTEGRITY -- A high performance, closely integrated team in any business is based on integrity -- high standards of conduct -- absence of deviousness, political gamesmanship, whispers and rumors, back biting, and other forms of toxic behavior. Also, this involves a commitment to the ethics and tradition of the sport of Rugby -- something like a Code of Conduct.

M - MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE -- Attention to detail, well-ordered systems, feedback and feed forward processes, financial accountability, time competence and respect for time appointments. Reliance on shared management responsibilities. Includes game management principles and techniques.

E - HIGH ENERGY -- Individual energy levels are synergized

into high levels of team energy -- even though raw -- that can be focused and channeled in a strategic fashion on specific outcomes. (This suggests it should not be blocked, or dissipated, or wasted, or spent on negative outcomes -- such as violence, fights, responses to media criticism -- "at home" crises -- or in internal conflicts. Aggression should not be controlled; rather, it must be channeled and focused for positive results.

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So, a team is in PRIME when . . .

- 1.1 It feels physically strong, poised, relaxed, fresh, lean, precise, and is ready to EXPLODE with powerful energy at kick off. Legs must be alive -- footsteps lively -- use of force leverages clean, quick with max power (like breaking a board). (No lead feet!) Different positions will have a different sense of the physical -- Forwards like strong bulls -- or a scrum of steel. Strong Backs like pile drivers to tackle or advance ball -- Wing Backs like lightening flashes that attack, slant, slash, with sudden acceleration and flare. (Believe you should work to activate these metaphors and symbols because they awaken the natural playing systems in athletes.) Each player could have a nature, mythical (Thor) or animal's nick name. Separate shirts could be printed to designate STRIKE FORCE.
- 1.2 Emotional pressure is pumped into the internal power cell. Crowd energy - either positive or negative -- is used as raw power to be maximized. Negative thoughts, fear, uncertainties, or even tentativeness are replaced by feelings of power and grace. Each player feels an integrated whole - can transcend self into something larger, greater, with more meaning -- and each player experiences sheer joy, excitement, and revels in the opportunity to meet his destiny, to join in the hunt, to take the beachhead, or to become part of history.
- 1.3 Team is mentally alive and alert. OK to be edgy, ready to fight, with lots of testosterone flowing through the blood -- but all of this should be used to keep attention levels high. Deep breathing through BOTH NOSTRILS will help to get into this high attention pitch - like one feels in the game reserve when lions are on the prowl -- that kind of electricity that has all the senses at high

registers. This keeps tighter self control to avoid foolish penalties of all kinds. The MIND IS IN THE GAME! (Avoids "lead heads" to go with lead feet -- sluggishness -- sleepy state. Do you make much use of oxygen in pregame or half time. Is it legal?) Too often players rely on uppers or outlawed chemicals. Certainly to attain this condition there must be proper rest and especially, a regular sleeping pattern instead of erratic late nights and sleep-ins the next morning. (Part of PEAK.) Also alcohol will be a factor, here. (Not certain what you have decided to do with the Breathe Right Dilators. This is not a GIMMICK. Biorhythms are -- but not these. If nothing else, use them during the three hours BEFORE a game -- and even after. There is medical evidence, apparently, that they do allow more oxygen to flow through the system on the part of everybody. You will need to explain to the team why you are using them).

- 1.4 Team is able to keep raising the game to a higher and higher level. It is poised to start as high as pre-game mental and physical preparation will provide -- but the game itself will offer the stimulation to climb up the ladder. This should also occur in the beginning of the second half. (See following PRIME CYCLE) Some coaches get the team artificially high at the first and are never able to get the team back to even that level. Our purpose will be to modulate the team - a term from music that describes a change in key -- to even a higher level that only fierce, on the field stimulation can provoke. This is the reason I've virtually begged everybody I can reach to use Zulu drums. Nobody is listening. They could be orchestrated during the game -- with sudden signals for the team to STEP UP. This would be very subtle. We use marching/pep bands in the US for such a purpose. When the Cowboys come out of the offensive huddle to snap the ball for the next play, certain kinds of musical fanfares are played. I have no idea whether this is legal in Rugby Union but you should at least raise the question. The drums -- and even a ZULU war party - could lead the team onto the field and arouse the crowd -- and strike fear in the heart of the opposition. Drums, like war chants, reach deep into the psyche of humans. This is a powerful weapon you could certainly use. Also activates WARRIOR.
- 1.5 Team plays within itself as opposed to overreaching. Because of all the external pressure to win -- from many different quarters -- you will need to remove and channel that pressure. Otherwise, the team will become stiff, emotionally frozen and spaced out -- because the sensitive and often immature emotional systems are overwhelmed. The concept "play within yourself" is a good way to counter that highly stressful pressure and avoid vapor lock. It then radiates

confidence, feelings of being in control, and a decided sense of JOY -- thus producing a release from guilt, obligations, debts, negative messages from internal and external, and certainly self doubts.

- 1.6 Heroic individuals stand out, take charge, suddenly perform an unbelievable athletic action. These cannot be predicted or staged - but the culture/climate/chemistry of the team is set to encourage them -- and then celebrate them with great gusto. You ask: "Who will stand out this game? Who will rise to the occasion? Who will make the play? Who will capture the moment? Who will climb the mountain and plant our flag or banner?"
- 1.7 Team members are able to reinforce each other with positive words, support, responses -- even when someone makes a mistake. These forms of verbal upliftment could be used all along the line so that the self-talk and team-talk is always positive. No blame finders or cynics -- and the players who are not selected for the 15 man side should support, encourage, almost ceremonially "put their hands" on the others in the inner circle -- to symbolically transfer all of their energy into them.

So, when a team reaches PRIME is prepared, has the potential, and should be poised to shift into the ZONE where individuals and teams play beyond their capacities -- are stronger, quicker, brighter, better coordinated, and more resourceful/creative than their opponents.

The three words that best describe this competitive capacity are FOCUS, FORCE, AND FLOW.

FOCUS - clear, fresh, uncontaminated minds -- with total concentration on the game - both in preparation and in performance. All the senses are on high beam. Feelings of fear and danger have been turned into basic survival instincts. Eyes and minds are tuned up to see cues and signs -- Everybody is alert and picks up on control/strategy messages. Makes possible better eye, hand, foot coordination and timing. Music in change room can help -- but the kind of music that dances in the mind to start the neurons to rapid fire. You will need to simulate all of this so it will be familiar. You are literally speeding up the brain's firing of the neurons. Fast drums will help. All of this is free from emotions -- simply engineering/physics principles and procedures.

Lemon smell is excellent in clearing up the brain's cobwebs -- like simple house sprays. In fact, the sense of smell is

extremely strong because it goes directly to the brain without being filtered or interpreted.

Your enemy, here, will be distractions during the next two weeks. The team needs to "go into the wilderness" and spend some "lone time" -- to give chance to contemplate, to write letters to parents, friends, family, high school coaches, significant others -- anybody -- living or dead -- maybe even to Doc Craven - to be delivered to his widow/family. Your job will be to be the scapegoat, lightning rod, to even create pseudo issues by throwing a tantrum yourself just to deflect the attention, criticism, or frenzy off the team and onto you. You will need to reduce the amount of external stimulation they've been exposed to during the last couple of weeks. Ideally, you would be in a spartan like existence -- isolated from media, television, radio, newspapers. This will be a period of dedication. Of anointing. Of getting inside self. Of intimate team talk. Of visits with positive spirits - like a de Klerk or Mandela -- or some old Springbok. Basics are stressed. Team cohesion is created.

Light workouts that barely raise the sweat are essential. The thoroughbreds are being made ready for the big race. You and others will need to use calm-talk -- not rah rahs - or "you gotta win because." No guilt or fear raising. No calls to arms. The upCYCLE will start on May 22. The team should be cloistered or, as you say, put into a deep freeze. But, the time must be used in a constructive fashion. Otherwise, many will grow stale, grumpy, and inert. There are lots of ways you could use this time to build to the PEAK and PRIME, to prepare for the ZONE. You must get the team talking -- individually and as a team. More about this later.

FORCE - Here we find the deep motives, the primal sources of power, stamina, inner strength, dedication, and "to the death" impulses. These are the systems within, the hot buttons, the personal/emotional drives that exist within players and within the collective team as well. Think of them as energy fields that lie deep within the human rivers of thought -- and that provide the wellsprings from which manhood, self-identity, and life scripts emanate. Your task will be to see to it that all four systems are activated, resonated, appealed to and are triggered when it's time to go to war.



In short, different players will hear the call to battle in different tunes, melodies, and frequencies.

**MYSTICAL BROTHERHOOD.** All-for-one-and-one-for all. We all stand together as one family -- a blood-bond that is greater than anyone of us. We are Springbok. A fire burns in our hearts to remind us of this sacred bond. I am only strong because we are strong - one and indivisible. Here you have the appeal of African music; the rituals and symbolism of the game and its origin; rallying around each other to face a common enemy. So "team" has a mystical significance and this provides for many the sole reason for dying for a cause, or reaching down for the last ounce of strength in the scrum in the final minute of play when everything is on the line. This motivational system chants, declares oaths and pledges, protects the inner circle and is resplendent with superstitions, rituals, magic/muthi hexes, curses and blessings -- and need for strong father figures from the coaches.

**WARRIORS AND WARLORDS.** Feelings of personal power and conquest rule the mind. The Dragons must be slain; the enemy must be conquered. Take no quarter. Give none back. It's man against man in a jungle warfare. No holds are barred. Each man for himself. Attack, destroy, humiliate, intimidate, leave your mark and become a legend in the hearts and minds of men. Get RESPECT because you stood tall against all odds and adversaries. Your sense of manhood is on the line. Unbearable shame MUST be avoided at all cost. Persevere and dominate because only a few will be left standing when the smoke clears. You expect to be one of them.

**STOUT HEARTS.** These are the true believers, the men who will stand for and defend THE RIGHT -- the flag, the Truth, the Way, the Fatherland, the rich Traditions, the Patriotic calling -- the cause celeb. Herein lies Duty, Honour, and Country. The Alma Mater, martial/patriotic music, the ceremonies and traditions -- are all vital. Failure brings unbearable guilt - the inability to face one's noble calling. This system, especially, will feel the pressure from others who represent the Springbok traditions. They represent Good vs. Evil; they play for "the cause" rather than personal ego. They will sacrifice self for the Higher Power, Divine Calling, or National Honour. They defend Holy Ground.

SUCCESS SEEKERS. This is a self-focused system that is always looking for an advantage, the opportunity to win -- to achieve full potential and high status -- to get the best endorsements and look good. Personal image is valued. Will strive hard to win for the team but it really means winning for SELF. They will show leadership, respond to strategy, and go all out but always with a reservation in their mind. This fairly new value system is developing within Afrikaner youth as they awaken to a wider world and look for opportunities to excel. This system wishes to be autonomous, be able to maneuver, and wants to exercise more responsibility.

In summary of FORCE:

SYSTEM	IN SEARCH OF	DARK SIDE
BROTHERHOOD	Safety, belonging, love	FEAR, alienation
WARRIORS	Conquest, power, spoils	SHAME, Loss of face
STOUT HEARTS	Redemption, salvation, justice	GUILT, betrayal
SUCCESS SEEKERS	Excellence, achievement	DEFEAT, demoralized

Each player will have combinations of these with varying priority stacks. Victories will cause that inner system to celebrate; a defeat will cause the "dark side" of the system to appear. Expect a considerable amount of turbulence during the entire World Cup as unforeseen events either improve conditions or test the team's resilience.

Other systems are beginning to form in some athletes elsewhere but I seldom see them in sports like American football and rugby. If you constantly appeal to and accommodate these four Motives you will pretty much cover the range.

FLOW - This is the most elusive of the three primary ZONE producing factors and is one that is difficult to activate. The mind must be alive and fluid. The team as a whole must be well integrated and in sync. It must think, move, and react as a single mind. Time slows down. The ball appears bigger. Players appear at the right place at the right time. The motion is relatively smooth with little wasted energy. The sense can often be seen in the coordinated

scrum that pushes the opposing team across the "try" line - or in the sudden strike from several backs around the boundary when everything is natural, well oiled, and precise. The enemies are fear, selfishness, raggedness, bad timing, disjointedness, and lack of FOCUS.

## II. Preparing for and Playing the HEARTS & MIND game

We all have biological computers within our bio-psycho-social system and this is the source of the Hearts & Mind motives and capacities. It is not necessarily logical nor is it reasonable. It exists at more the subconscious than conscious level. It is intuitive, natural, "right brain," and elusive. No one has ever seen it, measured it, or quantified it. It cannot be controlled at will nor easily influenced by external pressure or messages.

It is often shaped and molded by sudden, reframing events and issues. It has a mind and intelligence of its own and is smarter than we are. The Bio-Computer is best programmed and developed over a long period of time to create a series of automatic rather than calculated responses to life conditions and stimuli. This gives more control to a person who can adapt more quickly to changes in the here-and-now, and can self-will many things to happen. Yet, I believe athletes can be trained to improve their internal control (PEAK) and thus be able to contribute on a consistent basis to PRIME.

Note these activities:

1. Team talk and small focus group discussions that encourage a person to describe the nature of his Bio-Computer - its strengths, weaknesses, and patterns.
2. The use of movies that provide a common experience for the players to discuss these matters. Suggest Chariots of Fire (STOUT HEARTS), Hoosiers (BROTHERHOOD), Navy Seals (WARRIORS) and Rudy (SUCCESS SEEKERS) as examples.
3. Personal conversations with Coach and Manager to highlight strengths, needs, relationships, etc. The Question: "What it takes for me to reach PEAK?"
4. Symbolic activities that are designed for BROTHERHOOD with appropriate rituals such as signing a blood oath, or going through a commitment ceremony, maybe with help from religious leadership.
5. "Quiet Moment" discussions with such people as FW de Klerk, Mandela, and others who have fought against difficult odds yet kept their

eyes on the prize.

6. Specialized speakers around leadership, success, and winning as motivators of the SUCCESS-SEEKERS for mind pump-ups.
7. Well designed simulations that put everything together in more lifelike conditions -- to reinforce visualization and pre-rehearsals in mind.
8. Keeping a notebook throughout the World Cup with designated time to write to record experiences, feelings, responses. Write letters to significant people to make a statement, get things dealt with that could haunt and impede performance, and feel good about sending good cheer.
9. Watch Springbok videos of great victories.
10. Playful-like surprises to change frame of reference and refocus attention (like the bloke who sings funny rugby songs.)
11. Deep, religious type experiences, especially for STOUT HEART. Suggest Ray McCauley from Reema. He will be in touch with more of the player spiritual systems than most other clerics. This is not to be a sermon, or speech, but an interactive session.

### III. Specific Procedures to Prepare for the World Cup.

- 1.1 Suggest Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday include training/awareness sessions around PEAK, PRIME, and ZONE. Could include brief presentations; evaluative and thoughtful forms and scales to respond to. Goals to set. Brain storming sessions to add to and tailor the concepts for South African rugby in 1995. Team Captain could be involved in a leadership role as well. (I have a response machine you could use to tap into the real feeling of the team on a number of issues.)
- 1.2 Friday night in Cape Town should begin "The Wilderness." This isolation period would be useful for soul searching, deep thought, careful preparation, communication, and rehearsal of game plan -- maybe even at Newlands at night. GOOD SPIRITS could be brought in for the QUIET TALK sessions.
- 1.3 On Monday you should begin the PRIME CYCLE. (SEE GRAPHIC.)
- 1.4 This starts the countdown to Thursday -- You might consider the idea of "a Surprise Attack on Australia. They are intruders on our shores that we must drive away. Hit them with a force they've

never seen before. They are over the hill - aren't as hungry as we are going to be."

1.5 There are three primary methods of keeping the team cohesive and united:

- A. The Common Enemy. The team must rally together because we all face the enemy -- the Huns at the gates -- the threat to our common existence.
- B. The Common Adversity Syndrome. THEY are out to get us -- the press, the officials, the critics, the second guessers -- so we must close ranks, join hands and hearts, and fight against the adversary.
- C. The Superordinate Goal. These are goings that everybody wants to reach but no one (or sub group) can do it on their own. Through a series of these experiences, the team becomes well integrated and will naturally pull together against all odds, come hell or high water. THIS IS BY FAR THE STRONGEST AND MOST LASTING OPTION.

1.6 You will get an extra lift for WINNING by focusing on the unique opportunity, the life-defining moment, the extraordinary challenge you are about to face. Grasp and savour the moment. Relish and celebrate the event while it is taking place. Let it be the crowning joy, the ultimate experience -- the result of years of hard work and dedication which now will prepare you for the ultimate test -- one that has great historical significance. From now on the historians of South African rugby, and every bloke who sits in a bar talking about the game -- will mark this game and this Cup as the beginning of a new day in rugby. Your name will forever be on that roster -- to be honored by every schoolboy who ever plays the game.

This will be your place in destiny. You will live up to and exceed the challenge because of your inner spirit. We will win. We will reign supreme. This is our country, these are our shores -- and we will reach our SIX GAMES TO GLORY. What we can DREAM, we can DO.

1.7 For current and future interests:

Sports Psychology is a confused hybrid of many different types of programs and interventions. It has yet to form itself into a distinctive and recognisable discipline of study because of the wide range of definitions and applications.

SP-1: Individual improvement as used by tennis players and golfers to

keep focus, purge out negative thoughts, and enhance concentration.

SP-2: Clinical or Counseling psychologists or psychiatrists who deal with life crises, relationships, and other aspects of dysfunction such as divorces, serious personal problems, depression, etc. These range in scope from in-depth analysis and therapy to situational problems that require short-term interventions. Focus is on people or groups (families etc.) who are unhealthy and want to get "NORMAL." These will run the gamut from psychoanalysis (Freud) to Watson-Skinnerian with carrots and sticks, to more humanistic orientations from Carl Rogers et. al.

SP-3: Team and leadership focused issues and processes that deal more with complex relationships, motivations, communication issues, and other such matters but from a long term, developmental, systems-oriented perspectives -- more like "engineers." Focus is on HEALTHY people and systems who want to perform at higher levels of competency and efficiency.

SP-4: Motivational, pump-up specialists who attempt to jump-start players/teams through emotional speeches, contrived events, or superficial games -- but as basically one-off interventions. Tend to accept and practice behaviourism as the preferred mode of treatment.

SP-5: Visualization specialists who encourage athletes to explore their inner worlds, release energy, remove blockages, activate deeper sources of strength, and call upon more "right brain" capacities. Very eclectic in use of psychological models, some very innovative and creative.

When asked whether you are interested in "sports psychology" you might inquire as to which variation and form the questioner has in mind. And, as the World Cup process unfolds, you might need to access specific kinds of "sports psychology" if a particular situation warrants it. Unhappily, many athletes shy away from "sports shrinks" for fear they will put them on the couch, stroke their Freudian beards, and force the poor soul to reveal the deep, dark secrets. They have good reason to be concerned.

Dr. Don Beck  
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