

# Finding Focus



Finding, maintaining, and understanding “the zone.”

# When do we focus?

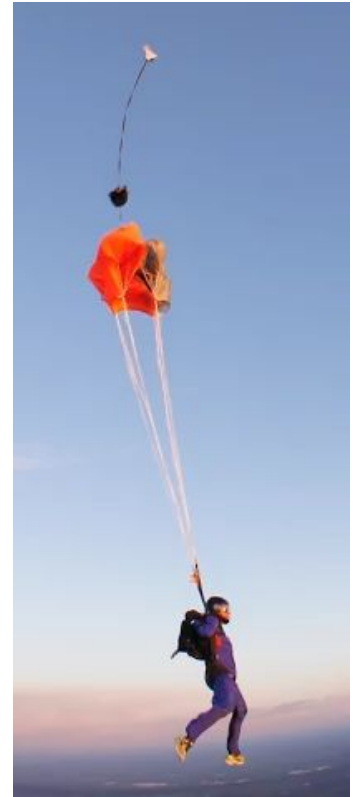
- Andrei: coding
- Dylan: jamming out
- Aaron: writing poetry
- Adrian: managing Andrei, Dylan, and Aaron



⇒ But *how* do we focus?

# Our Interview Candidates

1. Stanford Football Players
2. Skydiver
3. Musical Performer
4. Dolby Program Manager ... (control).



Extreme **stress**  $\Rightarrow$  Extreme **focus**

# Josh and Kyle: the teddy bear committee

“We really have to focus in our **one assignment.**”

“That’s what we **know**, what we’ve **practiced**, and we can’t go away from it.”





# **Cole: reluctant adrenaline junkie**

“I love the feeling of being terrified.”

# Jin: Fleet Street's Fearless Music Director

“It’s **organic** and has a **natural human feel** to it.”

“It’s the **intensity** of the **vulnerability.**”



# Joe Barsoian: Office Warrior

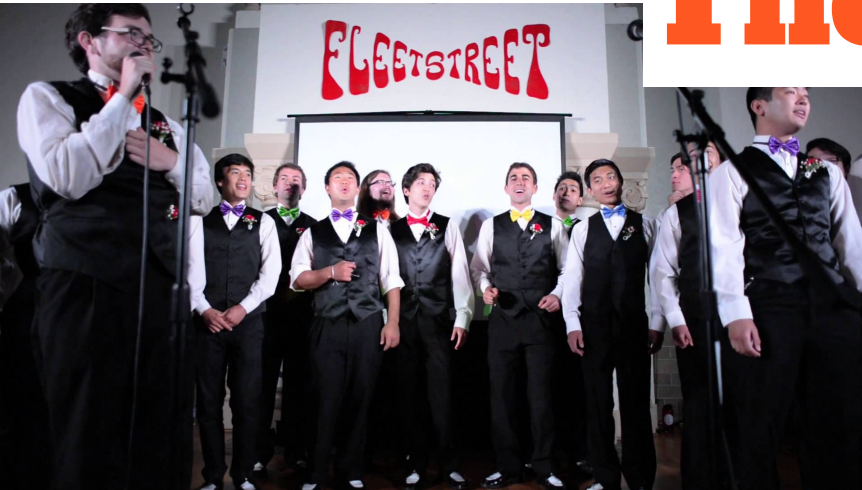
‘In my line of work, **distraction is inevitable**. When it comes, you can’t let it **control** you.’

‘You have to be ready to say **“I’ll think about this later,”** and *really mean it.*’



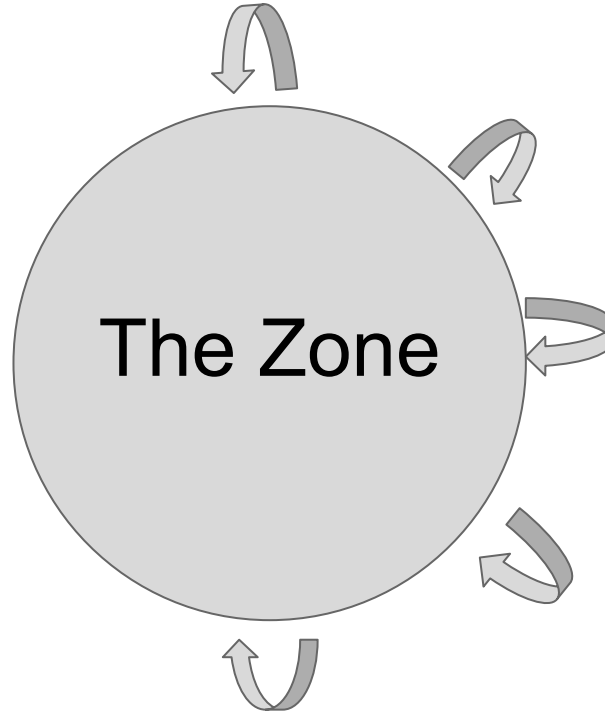


# The Zone





# Achieving and Maintaining



# Empathy

## Say

Practice, slow down, act don't think, do what you know, don't get engrossed in mistakes in the moment, community, high stakes, repetition, confidence

## Do

Chew gum, drink coffee, repetitive task, practice, have "mechanics" prepared, rituals

## Think

I can't fail because if I do... I can't think about what I've done wrong, return to my comfort zone, return to what I know, imagine success

## Feel

Anxiety, fear of failure, fear of consequences, confidence in one's own ability, connection to others, sense of timing and pace

# Insights from extreme users

- Difficult to **enter** the “zone,”
  - exhausting when you leave
- **Preparation**, repetition, key to gaining focus
- Additional stimuli to **maintain** focus
  - Comes in short or long periods
- High **stakes** encourage focus