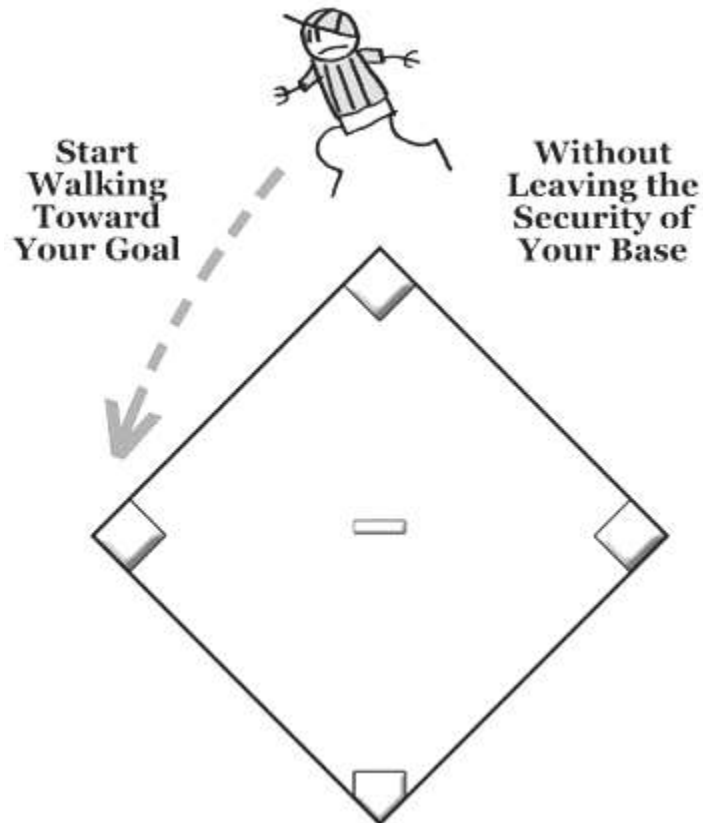


Practice Poking Around



*“Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.
Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path.”
Proverbs 4:25-26 (NLT)*

Coach Heinlen didn't say much, but he knew how to win. Stern, the flat-topped stickler had been around for a long time. He thought deeply about all sorts of things, teaching life lessons—baseball wisdom too,

of course. One lesson with double meaning resonates.

He instructed us to lead off from second base, not directly between second and third, but starting from behind the base, and, as the pitcher began his wind-up, to start walking toward third. Heinlen's logic? A moving start created an otherwise improbable chance to score with a hit to left field. Plus, should the pitcher whirl around in a pick-off move, the runner could dive back easily. A greater chance to score without increasing risk... a win-win!

Likewise, a moving start exposes otherwise unseen opportunities to advance your Mission. As the proverb directs, fix your eyes on your Mission and start walking, but stay on the safe path! As a glance from the pitcher freezes a runner who drifts too far from the base, a jab from your enemy stirs fear that brings your Mission to a standstill. Frozen, you'll never know what opportunities you've missed. A dearth of opportunities could well be he's got you cowering too close to base.

Reflect: How many opportunities to advance my Mission am I encountering?

How do you start walking so as not to miss opportunities while minimizing exposure to the paralyzing jabs of your enemy?

"I asked, 'What should I do, Lord?' And the Lord told me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything you are to do.'" The Apostle Paul (Acts 22:10)

Paul begins his Mission by asking, "What should I do, Lord?" We ask this powerful question far too infrequently... ask it! Instilling faith, Jesus didn't give Paul the entire answer, just one step – connect. Your first step matches. From here, he will reveal your next moves. What

opportunities would have opened if Paul had wallowed in his blindness along the road?

Consider: **Opportunities open through connections with others, how risky is this?**

How might you dramatically increase your connections with others? Practice poking around.

- ① Share your Mission with everyone you know.
- ② Ask, “Who do you know who might help me with this?”
- ③ Meet and explore with these connections, repeating steps 1 and 2 with them.

As your web grows, creativity increases, and opportunities appear. Watch out! An overzealous imagination opens you to the paralyzing jabs of your enemy. Projecting opportunities too far down the road, thoughts of impossibility take root. Retain control by remaining close to base by making no commitments, it's too soon.

“We can gather our thoughts, but the Lord gives the right answer” (Proverbs 16:1)

Simply collect your thoughts, pray, lay everything before the Lord and patiently await the “hit to left field.”

Imagine: **Already in motion, I'm positioned to seize my new opportunity.**

Like a good base runner is prepared to run at the crack of the bat, position yourself.

“...let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily

trips us up.” (Hebrews 12:1)

It’s hard to run when overburdened by debt, non-essential obligation, emotional baggage... start shedding, become nimble.

“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. Jesus Christ (Luke 16:10)

While waiting, don’t let neglect of your current responsibilities snuff out new opportunities. Stay alert! Who’s to say what God might do once you...

Practice Poking Around.

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach’s Questions

- Ask, “What should I do, Lord?”
 - What existing connections will I reach out to first as I begin to poke around?
 - Identify excess baggage: How will I release it so I’m ready to run?
-

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Start Walking.

“So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world.”

The Apostle Peter | 1 Peter 1:13



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