

JUST WALK ACROSS THE GREEN

“If you could just walk across a green and connect someone to Jesus
IT just might change the way you play golf”

Contents

Welcome

Why *The Just Walk Across the Green book*?

Before We Get Started

Readying for the Fairway

The Clubs You’ll Use

Developing the Swing of Your Story

Conversation on the Course

Tools and Resources

Welcome!

Welcome to *The Just Walk* playbook! Thank you for your interest and commitment to reaching your fellow golfers for Christ. Whether on the fairways of life or on the golf course, we trust this tool will empower and inspire you to naturally share your own story of receiving the “Ultimate Mulligan” with friends and new acquaintances.

Based on our book *The Mulligan*, this playbook prepares you to confidently share the gift of God’s second chance with anyone you meet — particularly golfers, as much of the language used in this playbook is language other golfers will appreciate, but ultimately with anyone in your life who is needing to trust their life into Christ’s hands. The greatest gift you can give someone is to extend the love of Christ through a friendship. This is the very essence of the way in which Jesus reached the world with his love, one friend at a time. He is our greatest model. People all over the world are looking to fill the void that only Christ can satisfy. What an honor to come alongside a new friend and, through a genuine relationship, connect them to Jesus and His direction for their lives. Golf provides such a wonderful median to share the gospel with others by building a friendship and reaching out to others with God’s love Just the Way, Jesus did. When you’re out on the golf course for 4 or 5 hours you have a lot of time to build a lasting friendship by asking good questions. So just walk across the green and make some new friends and trust Jesus to do the rest.

Therefore this playbook is designed to help you share your faith with anyone you meet. As such, the first half of the book includes general principles, couched in golfing language and analogies, that can be applied to any life situation, conversation, or relationship. A section is also included to help you develop your personal mulligan story (the most important club in your bag) so you’re prepared to share it with others. Then later in the playbook, we offer specific suggestions for demonstrating the love of Christ on the actual golf course. On the whole, this playbook should equip you to be ready in season and out of the season—on the golf course or the course of daily life—to share the hope of the Gospel message with others.

To begin, know that *The Mulligan* book, written by Wally Armstrong and Ken Blanchard, can be a pivotal first step to introducing faith in Christ to others. By giving the book to a new golfing friend, you will find a number of opportunities to naturally begin discussing issues of faith. In fact, prior to using this playbook, we encourage you to read *The Mulligan* because its principles form the foundation of what we teach in the following pages. Plus, it’s important to know the story so you’re prepared to talk about it with your friends when they finish reading it! Copies of *The Mulligan* book can be ordered through oldprobooks.com.

There are many additional resources to support you beyond the pages of this playbook, as well. Check out the “Tools and Resources” section of this playbook to learn about other materials that can help you share the hope of experiencing the greatest second chance of all time.

This playbook was derived in part from principles developed by Will McRaney of the Southern Baptist Convention. We are grateful to him for his wisdom and heartfelt insight into this particular facet of friendship evangelism. Thanks also goes to CRU. Its Living and Telling seminar has provided the prototype for our approach in this playbook.

Why *The Just Walk* Playbook?

We don't need the mounting evidence to show us that most men and women who are not followers of Christ will never enter into that relationship because they visited a church. And most people who are followers of Christ and mature disciples were probably introduced to Him through a trusted friend. That combination provides a great backdrop for sharing your faith on the fairways or simply with friends who will understand and appreciate the analogies found between golf and the Gospel message. In this way, you can develop relationships on common, non-threatening ground.

Our Example

Will Dunn is the Old Pro in *The Mulligan*. He has a significant impact on a corporate man named Paul, whom he befriends and introduces to Christ. Will Dunn becomes a model for all golfers who love Jesus and want to impact their golfing friends with the Gospel. He reflects well a disciple's life and models God's love through his interactions. We hope what is offered in this playbook will enable you to take Will's example and integrate it into your own interactions with the "Pauls" in your own life—whether you meet them on the golf course or on the course of life.

Ultimately, Jesus is our perfect example for this. We have story after story of His befriending people, meeting them where they were, and lovingly pointing them to His father and the kingdom of God. When he entered this world he came as one of them and spoke their language and used parables/analogies to real-life situations that they could understand and identify with. If He lived today do you think some of his best parables may have related to golf? He reached out to folks with very real handicaps, not just one relating to a golf score. He was drawn to and sensitive to the needs of others. And He didn't offer a temporary solution; His solution was eternal.

The models of the old Pro and the friendship way Jesus presents can strengthen our approach with others on the golf course and in the course of our regular lives. People will trust your message after they trust you. And they will trust you once you have developed a friendship with them. After all, remember that Jesus walked! Taking time to focus on others, listen to them, and practice life and golf etiquette with a servant's heart builds trust in those relationships, and that enables your story and God's story to be not only shared but also conveyed with the greatest integrity.

Before We Get Started

Getting Our Hearts in the Game

As the Old Pro encouraged Paul to enter into his day slowly, we'd like you to do the same thing here. It might be helpful to take some time right now to evaluate where you are in your own relationship with God before moving into the process of learning to share your faith with others.

1. Have you made a personal decision to follow Jesus, and have you accepted Him as your personal Lord and Savior?
2. Do you have a desire to grow in an intimate relationship with Him?
3. Where do you find your own self-worth — in your performance and the opinions of others or in the security of God's love?
4. Do you have a regular daily time of Bible study and prayer? It's important to take care of your inner self, as the Old Pro reminds Paul to do.
5. Do you have an eternal view of life and see God's hand working in every facet of your life — at home, at work, and in recreation? Do you have a desire to play the course less-played with Jesus as your caddie and friend? Do you see him in your mind's eye walking shoulder to shoulder with you facing life together?
6. Do you have a heart of compassion for people who may not know Christ? Do you desire to reach out to them and share the good news through your friendship with them? Are you willing to hear their story, as well as share your own story and God's story?
7. Do you pray for others and serve them by asking good questions and listening?
8. Are you willing to learn?

Of course, it would be difficult to do all of these things all of the time and do them well. It is our hope that developing in the above areas will begin a process in you over time to know God better and become closer to His Son, your ever-present Lord, caddie and friend, Jesus.

Getting Our Heads in the Game

Remind yourself that this training is not a project. It is, at its core, a tool by which to equip and encourage you to:

1. Proclaim the message in a new way through golfing analogies to life and faith. "I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (I Cor 9:22).
2. Share your story, listen to theirs, and ultimately share the opportunity to receive God's ultimate mulligan. "The love of Christ compels us" (II Cor 5:14).
3. Play ready; be prepared to share your own story of hope. "Be ready always to give an answer for the hope within you" (I Peter 3:15).
4. Recognize that now is the time, while you're able and man is still separated from God. "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14).

Readying for the Fairway

Know Your Purpose

Our greatest ability is our availability. And because of that our purpose is to continually walk with Jesus and together develop relationships as an extension of His love for others. We build trust with those who cross our path, or enter our fairway, by asking good questions, listening, and being an encouragement. Your openness to who God puts in front of you is part of your opportunity to “love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27).

The reality is, it’s not about you, as Rick Warren’s *Purpose-Driven Life* reminds us. Concentrating on and caring for the other person, whether on life’s course or the golf course, is the basis for building the kinds of relationships that will count for eternity. C.S. Lewis once said that at every moment in our relationships with others, we are leading them either to the Royal and Ancient clubhouse or to the pit of hell. Each word of encouragement, act of kindness, or moment of silence to truly listen is an investment on which we cannot put a price.

Know God’s Role

The idea that “no one comes to the Father unless the Father draws him” (John 6:44) ought to feel very freeing. Noted author Regi Campbell has learned that “it is not my job to save somebody.”

We are only the folks who get to join God where He is already working. And if you’ve built into a relationship, gained trust, and listened well, you will have earned the right to be heard. But remember, God simply calls us to be faithful. The “success” of someone receiving the Ultimate Mulligan is God’s, and you may not even be a part of that decision. But you do have the honor of being part of one friendship which draws someone closer to Jesus.

Know Your Role

Have a great time on and off the fairway, as a loving representative of the God of the universe! Your role will be to find common ground with others, naturally share your story, and enjoy the process. Remember the Old Pro and the roving mulligan? It freed Paul to enjoy the game. We hope the tools we’re sharing in this playbook will do the same for you, helping you break the ice and connect with people on and off the course in word and action.

St. Francis of Assisi admonished believers to “preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.” As that representative of the Lord, how you handle yourself on any course has the tremendous capacity, good or bad, to influence your testimony. And in all of this, you are able because God is the one who is giving you the ability. You can walk the fairways of life and play the game in confidence. In fact, a famous golfer once said that golf is played on six inches of real estate — the space between your ears. How true that your mindset can determine your course of play in any situation! Walk boldly. You and your servant’s heart have the capacity and honor to point someone to Christ!

You will not have all the answers. But He has given you the skill set and heart to be a friend and to be faithful. That is all He asks of us.

Know Your Course

Your course is the lay of the land, the culture, and the people whom you will encounter, whether on the golf course or the course of life. Here are some helpful questions to ask yourself as you evaluate each day's opportunity to play a round — of golf or of life! — with others:

- What course are you readying to play this day?
- Is it a competitive round or casual and friendly?
- Who are the people you'll encounter?
- Are you out of town on business or vacation? Since the people you meet in these circumstances are folks you may never see again, it may require a more direct approach as the Spirit leads.

We've noticed that the players you'll encounter on any course, on or off the golf course, usually fall into the following categories:

Apathetic: These folks don't know Jesus and don't care. There's a good chance they've had a bad experience with church or a Christian and are holding it against God.

Searching: They believe they've found the answer but it's false and/or hollow.

Frozen Chosen: People who profess to knowing Christ personally, but there's no growth.

Developing: Disciples who are growing and active but limited in their scope. They have their church, their forgiveness, and grace but that's the extent of their walk.

Having an idea of where people are gives you the understanding of where to enter in and begin the conversation with them.

Know Your Partner

It is helpful to approach life, as well as the golf course, with at least one other trusted friend and follower of Christ. The relationship between the two of you is a great model to others you may encounter together of how Christ-followers love and care for one another. Weren't we taught that "they'll know we are believers by our love"? How mighty an influence to see Christ's love in action! Christ sent out the disciples two by two because He wanted the good news of The Ultimate Mulligan carried out by close friends working together. Jesus prayed to his Father that that we would "become perfectly one, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them even as You loved Me" (John 17:23).

Know Your Caddie

Jesus is the one who walks alongside you shoulder to shoulder in any fairway. He calls us every day through his simple song found in Matthew 11 – "Come to me... take my yoke... and learn. He is the one who knows you best and knows your handicap(s). He congratulates, admonishes,

and offers up the most appropriate club for a given situation while still giving you the freedom to choose which club you'll use. Without this intimacy, any endeavor will be one of manipulation.

As you approach an opportunity to begin a new friendship with someone always begin in your mind's eye visualize Jesus standing beside you and enter into a dialogue with Jesus. His model of friendship and guidance will be a helpful reminder of how to be with others. Remember that He loves being with us. His example can set the tone for how we'll be with others. In John 14:1 He says, "Do not be afraid." He encourages us in John 14:27, "Trust in Me." John 15:12 reminds us, "Remain in Me and love each other."

We can be assured, as our hearts are open, that Christ will appoint divine circumstances to allow us to point others to Himself. The more relaxed, comfortable, and confident we are in our friendship with Him, the more relaxed and confident we will be with others. Please see the Pep Talk Truths in the "Approaching the Fairway" section to reinforce how He'll be guiding you in the process!

Pep Talk Truths

If Jesus were in the locker room with you as you're preparing to head to the golf course or life course each day, He might remind you of the following:

- There's nothing to fear because I am with you every step of the way.
- My Spirit goes before you, prepares hearts, and sets up appointments. Nothing is accidental, but designed. Just go, play ready, and enjoy the day. It's all okay.
- I will go before you, come along behind you, and follow up.
- I promise to give you the words to speak. Just show up and initiate a conversation in love.
- There's no pressure; you cannot fail. Some sow, some water, and some reap. Those are the only three things that can happen, so just enjoy the process.
- Don't be alarmed if conflict comes into play. My Spirit is working through it all.
- Let's go out there and enjoy meeting people. I'll take on all the responsibility for what happens.
- Remember, I created mankind for relationships and designed them to be nourished by our Father and Me. People are thirsty for security and significance. Nothing can satisfy this thirst except My Spirit. I am the living water!
- It's okay not to have all the answers. I am in control of the results; you can't blow it. Even if you lose your courage, I still love you.
- Everything is laid out, so just step out and walk with me. Come alongside and take one end of the yoke. I am your companion, and I'm ready to pull along with you.

The Clubs You'll Use

Playing a round of golf requires a continuous survey of the land, the elements, the angles, and the possibilities — all to determine the best club to use for each swing and each putt. The same is true for life. In every moment, we have the opportunity to pull from the full bag of spiritual clubs God gives us to navigate the fairways of life. Here are just a handful of the clubs available to us in each scenario we face.

Quiet Time

As the Old Pro taught Paul, a quiet time with the Lord is the absolute best way to start each day, let alone a game day. Each morning, pray that God will prepare your heart and the hearts of those you'll encounter that day. Ask God for opportunities to enjoy their stories and share your own. Trust Him with how you'll be received. Remind yourself of the truth that the God of all creation will be with you as you set out to glorify Him.

Prayer

Pray regularly with a fellow believer. If you golf together, pray before and during your time on the course. And if you're simply committed to navigating life together as believers, create time to pray regularly with each other. Realize that together, you already make up a fivesome (the two of you and the Trinity!) and that the Trinity has already gone ahead of you to superintend every moment of every encounter for your day and your life.

As you play a round of golf or daily life, address any sinful attitudes or actions that may arise so as to remain in God's grip for the remainder of the round. Practice developing an ongoing conversation with the Lord, praying for those you meet. As you listening to others, consider the promptings of the Holy Spirit and be slow to speak. Remember the Old Pro's reminder to Paul in *The Mulligan* when he said, "Your relationship with God gets better and more intimate when talking things over with Him is your first response rather than your last resort" (page 65).

Your Mulligan Story

This is your Big Bertha, if you will. Theology can be debated all day long, but a changed life cannot be argued. And your story is the only one like it. When you share how you received the ultimate mulligan in your own life and experienced significant change as a result, Christ's message then becomes real and personal to someone else. Your story becomes a vehicle through which others begin to believe their own stories can be changed.

Remember that God brings people to Himself in a myriad of ways. You can be confident that He will use your story to His glory. In the next section, we'll help you develop your story so that you're ready to share it with others.

Golf Analogies

As you read in *The Mulligan*, the Old Pro often made analogies between the games of golf and life. For example, sometimes a swing can work well on a series of holes, only to completely disappear one hole later. Or consider the perfect putt that “rims out” to cost us a birdie. It applies to life as well. We have it all figured out and then a situation, decision, or dynamic completely throws us off our game and how we’re living.

You will certainly find common ground with others in this. Everyone has experienced the frustration of a terrible shot, of learning the game, or of trying to trust a swing. This common ground develops an empathetic and open mind in the friend with whom you’re connecting.

Then, when it is appropriate, it will be time to introduce God’s story and the ultimate mulligan He offers. Become familiar with the way the Old Pro explained God’s ultimate mulligan to Paul to assist you in explaining, even in golf terms, the basics of how we got to where we are and the process by which God returns us to Himself.

Spiritual Truth

The Bible is our grid for living life. It is the foundation on which we base our beliefs, attitudes, and actions. This is the club, and your belief in it determines the capacity of every other club.

Be familiar with some key Scriptures that apply to your own mulligan story and God’s faithfulness in it. You’ll find many applicable verses in *The Mulligan* book. Applying these verses to life and golf analogies will reinforce their impact. For example, be ready to share not just about the scorecard swap but also what that means biblically so that your friend understands the full weight of the analogy.

Asking Questions

Launching into a conversation with a complete stranger can be awkward, no doubt. The following acronym, FORE, may help trigger some ideas in your mind to begin a dialogue. And try to remember it’s not an interrogation — a relationship is meant to develop naturally and smoothly!

Family

Where did you grow up? Where do you live now? What brought you here? Do you have brothers or sisters? Who taught you to play golf?

Marriage provides another obvious opportunity. How long have you been married? Any children? How old? What do you enjoy doing with them? What are their plans after school?

Occupation

What is it that drew you to this career? How long have you been in this position? How is business in this economic climate? What are some trends affecting your industry? Any challenges you're working on now?

Recreation

Obviously, golf is a part of this one but there are probably other ways your partner spends time. These kind of questions will offer other opportunities to discover common ground between you.

Encouragement

This one requires more action on your part than asking actual questions. Respond to your friend's own responses to your questions, listen for logical follow-ups, encourage them in their successes, empathize with them in their struggles. And remember, God is more interested in your being a good witness than in your witnessing.

Listening

It's sometimes difficult not to move ahead mentally in a conversation to think about what you'll ask or say next. But it is important to truly hear what your friend is saying. Ask follow-up questions for clarification. If you are familiar and comfortable enough with your own stories, your bag of clubs, and your trust in God to give you words, you'll be ready to listen.

Starting Spiritual Conversations

Here is a list of potential questions you might use if you are led to a more spiritual dialogue with someone in conversation:

1. Where are you on your spiritual journey right now, and where have you been?
2. Have you found meaning and purpose in your life?
3. What do you feel is your purpose in life?
4. Do you think that there is ultimate meaning?
5. What is your faith background?
6. What is your understanding of God?
7. In your view, what is the purpose of life? Why are we here?
8. What is your religious background?
9. If there is a God, would you like to know Him personally?

Leading the Way

When the time comes to share the Gospel with a friend, it can be helpful to use a tool that explains the fall, sin, Christ's redemption, and our opportunity to receive that redemption, along with Scripture passages that support these truths. On the "Tools and Resources" page, you'll find information about *Mulligan* pocket testaments you can use to make sharing the truths of the Gospel clear and accessible to others.

Developing the Swing of Your Story

As we shared in the previous section, your story is one of the most powerful clubs at your disposal for sharing the Gospel with others. And just like practicing your golf game, practicing your story improves each time you tell it.

The goal of good practice is muscle memory. It's getting the feel of the swing so ingrained into your memory bank that the swing becomes natural, like second nature. It's not forced or under tension, but it's relaxed and powerful. In life, the goal becomes developing and practicing your story so that it, too, becomes like a second-nature swing in the course of conversation.

Why Tell Your Story?

Everyone loves a story, and people can relate to others' experiences. It makes the ethereal concrete. It's credible because it's your own. The ultimate reason is to share the gift of a risen Savior. His impact on your life cannot be doubted because it is real and so are you.

Why Prepare?

As with your golf swing, it is a matter of preparation meeting opportunity. It is at the meeting point where you see results; the more simple the swing, the better the results. If your story is prepared, it will be succinct and clear.

Facing a tough shot, solid preparation gives you the confidence required to make the swing needed. And so, with your story, preparation provides the confidence to step out and swing. Remember how the Old Pro's interactions with Paul were not forced or uncomfortable? He was completely natural, comfortable, and warm. That's because he had equipped himself in advance to be thoroughly prepared to meet and mentor Paul when the opportunity came his way. So, too, will you be prepared by taking the time to develop your story below and then beginning to practice sharing it in opportunities presented to you.

What to Prepare

Have you ever heard some awfully ridiculous advice on the golf course? Perhaps a particularly poor cliché that has been offered to falsely promise great results? So it is with some folks' impressions of the [Lord's](#) message. There are many caricatures and a lot of misinformation about who we are and what we believe.

The following questions have been designed to help overcome that misinformation by applying your story to them. Take some time to briefly answer these questions mentally to begin creating your story.

1. What was my attitude before I took Jesus seriously?
2. Why did I say "yes" to Jesus?

3. How did I say “yes” to Jesus?
4. What difference does being a **believer** make in my day-to-day life?
5. What is a true believer anyway?

It would be helpful to develop two or three different ways you could answer the individual questions. Edit each to a couple of short sentences. Then you will have several different options as varying opportunities present themselves — just like pulling out the right club for a specific lie and distance, you’ll have multiple answers for different situations.

Here is some help in considering how to approach each question.

- Ask God to lead your thinking and give you wisdom (James 1:5).
- Reduce your answers to sound bites. You may only have a few seconds to share.
- Prepare answers to stand alone. You probably won’t give your story all at once, since that would be like throwing your entire bag of clubs at someone — look out!
- Write some single-word thoughts to capture your thoughts, hopes, fears, ambitions, emotions, etc.
- Be specific, be honest, and avoid “churchy” jargon.

Starting Your Story

Here are some examples that we hope will help you in writing out your own story on the worksheets below. We have included some examples that the corporate man, Paul McAllister, could have used when preparing his personal story.

1. What was my attitude before I met Jesus?

Most people you encounter will identify more with your attitudes than with your activities. Some answers might entail specifics like:

- a. I was a pleasure seeker.
 - b. I wore different masks.
 - c. I got to the age of 21 (or a level of success) and thought, “Is this it?”
 - d. I considered myself as having high moral standards.
- Paul: I placed money, power, and success above every relationship in my life.

2. Why did I say “yes” to Christ?

This will summarize your thought process and any challenges, crises, or experiences that led you to Christ. You might explain how you overcame barriers, how you found answers that satisfied you, or what motivated you to follow Christ:

- a. I wanted to find the real me.
- b. I found Christianity is about friendships and relationships, not rules and regulations.
- c. My dad’s death made stop and think.
- d. Suddenly the things I found confusing made sense.

Paul: I began to see that life was all about relationships with God and others.

3. How did I say “yes” to Christ?

It’s important to make clear here how you made that decision and acted upon it to put Jesus at the center of your life. This involves a process culminating in your decision to follow Christ. If you can’t recall a single point or specific decision, relate one or two specific examples where you noticed this process taking place. Consider:

- a. I confessed that Jesus is God and that He died to restore my broken relationship with Him.
- b. I admitted to God that I had been following my own way, not His.
- c. I asked God to become number one in my life, above everything else.
- d. I realized God forgave me, even if I couldn’t forgive myself.

Paul: I bowed my head and turned over my life to God and received the gift of the ultimate mulligan, Jesus as my Savior and Lord.

4. What difference does Christ make in my day-to-day life?

If you’ve been a believer for a while and have not thought much about this question lately, ask yourself, “How has Christ had an increasingly dominant influence in my life?” Think about sharing your recognition that you cannot possibly “do” life on your own. When Paul was given the freedom to set his own more realistic par, he played more freely. Perfection is not our goal, nor is it God’s, and recognizing we can’t even “do” imperfection here on earth without God’s help can be one of those differences. Other examples include:

- a. The Bible now makes sense to me; I can apply its teachings to how I live.
- b. I’m not as judgmental as I used to be. I know Jesus is coming back and it’s His job.
- c. I’m more interested in worthwhile and lasting relationships and less concerned with making money.
- d. I worry less because I know God is in control and that He’ll guide and protect me.

Paul: I experienced a transformation in my life through relationships that were established with God, my son, and others and in my business life.

5. What is a true believer anyway?

It’s important to keep this simple and direct:

- a. Someone who realizes that trying to live life on his or her own doesn’t work well; it actually insults God. Without Him, people miss out on the relationship and help He provides.
- b. A person who has discovered a friendship with God by admitting that they need His forgiveness; those who ask Him to be first in his/her life.

Paul: A person who realizes he is sinful and separated from God and has accepted God's offer of the ultimate mulligan. He has received eternal life by embracing Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord by accepting His scorecard, the perfect life lived for Him. This new

person finds significance in God’s love and forgiveness, not in performance. He lives life in a personal friendship with Jesus and the Father.

Summarizing Your Mulligan Story

Use the worksheet below to write out several brief answers to each of the questions. Practice with a friend, then listen and incorporate his suggestions for improvement. Begin to pray for opportunities to share these sound bites of your life story with nonbelievers.

MULLIGAN STORY WORKSHEET

What was my attitude before I took Jesus seriously?

Why did I say “yes” to Jesus?

How did I say “yes” to Jesus?

What difference does being a believer make in my day-to-day life?

What is a true believer anyway?

Using Your Story in Conversation

As you listen to someone else’s story, make a mental note of the ways you can connect and establish common ground between your stories, as well as God’s. Always having a couple of

personal “mulligan” stories in your bag will enable you to pull them out naturally and in a timely manner.

Your own sharing will open the door for your friend to perhaps share a second chance experienced in his own life. Barriers and masks are lowered and connection happens where weak points meet. As the Lord sees it, this is a moment of strength. He will be more than happy to walk with you in it and pave the way for you to share God’s story of the ultimate mulligan with your friend in opportune moments.

Par-Four Personal Challenge

A par-four hole can be daunting. But what many golfers don’t realize is that these longer holes are completely within grasp. Consider a decent drive — another couple of decent distance shots — and you can be on the green with just a putt left. It’s within your ability; don’t be put off by the long shot.

And so it is with the “Par-Four Personal Challenge” for sharing your story about becoming a follower of Christ. Some possibilities seem like long shots. Don’t be put off by the seeming unlikeliness of a situation. The following process will enhance your confidence for sharing on and off the course.

Over the next month or so, make a list of four people you meet on or off the golf course. Get their names. Ask them if they’d mind if you prayed for them in the coming weeks. You may wish to write their names down in the daytimer you carry with you as a reminder to pray for them.

When they answer your offer for prayer in the affirmative, ask for specifics: a personal need or challenge, an illness in the family, a decision they need to make. Make a note of it on your list of four people. These are now your “Personal Par Four.”

Be praying for these people and their specific needs each week. Ask God to give you ideas to connect with them further. Pray that you might be used to bring them into a personal friendship with Jesus Christ. At some point during this relationship, you may wish to offer them a copy of *The Mulligan* book or one of the other resources mentioned in the “Tools and Resources” section of this playbook.

Keep track of these needs for which you are praying. If it’s appropriate, seek them out again. Ask for updates regarding the prayer requests or if there’s anything else that might require prayer. Remember, these are friendships you are building, not projects you’re trying to complete!

Just like achieving par on a par-four hole doesn’t necessarily happen overnight, your personal par-four challenge may not see results quickly. But God honors perseverance. “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised” (Hebrews 10:36).

If God opts to honor your efforts by bringing one of your Personal Par Four to Himself, you now have the opportunity to not only add someone else to your Par-Four Personal Challenge, but also to introduce the new believer in Christ to this playbook so that he or she can begin multiplying the discipleship process in their own life!

Conversation on the Course

Over the last several sections of this playbook, we've considered the many ways you can prepare yourself to share the Gospel message with people you meet in any setting of life. All that we have covered can be applied to home life, work life, and other recreational activities, not just golfing encounters.

This section, however, prepares you specifically for conversations that can happen on the golf course. Use this section to prepare yourself spiritually, mentally, and relationally for the days you join others on the green for a friendly round.

Going to the Course

As you store *The Mulligan* book in your bag, consider your purpose for this round of golf. Is it friendly or fun? Is it for business? How will you approach the different personalities?

You'll be spending four or five hours with your partners. Don't forget to add a margin of time before your game and at the end, to allow for refreshments afterwards. Take your time; don't be in a rush, and be prepared. Then get out there and enjoy the time sinking putts and getting to know someone whom God loves enormously!

Teeing Off

Twenty to 30 seconds is all it takes for a first impression to be formed, so how you greet your golfing partners can and will lay the groundwork for the next four hours of your day. Assuming you've already entered into your day slowly (as the Old Pro suggested) and prayed for humility, guidance, and strength, you'll be in a great position to be warm and genuine and to extend a firm handshake. Remember, this is not about you. You want to convey to your partners that they are important and that you want to get to know them.

You may be the first person to extend the love of Christ to someone, but you are only a representative. Take confidence in what you know to be true: God loves both of you, He's in control, and He's eager to lead you in this round of golf. The pressure's off. Enjoy the process and simply be faithful.

Golf Etiquette with a Servant Heart

St. Francis of Assisi said, "Share Jesus at all times. When necessary, use words." You will earn the right to be heard when your actions show you care. Jesus is our greatest example of a servant.

1. Rake a trap for your partner or another member of your foursome.
2. When conditions are wet, hold an extra club for someone and share your umbrella.

3. Stand still while others are hitting.
4. Casually clean another's clubs.
5. Replace a partner's divot or fill it up with sand after their shot.
6. After putting out, make it a point to get the pin off the green and put it in the cup as often as possible.
7. When they're looking for a lost ball, help your partners. Don't give up too easily.
8. If a course doesn't allow carts on the fairways, then always offer to run a club to them.
9. Use a thumbs-up sign, high five, or fist punch in the air when they play a good shot.
10. Smile, smile, smile. Encourage, encourage, encourage.
11. If you're using pull carts or carrying bags, pull their cart as often as possible. Take their bag from the front of the green to the back to help speed up play and to be a good Samaritan on the course.
12. Carry a towel on the green and offer to clean a golf ball.
13. If you're driving the cart at the end of the round, deliver your riding partner to his/her car first and help unload the clubs.
14. When the refreshment cart arrives, be quick to offer to buy your partner a snack. Or offer to buy lunch after the round.
15. Stay positive when the wheels come off! If your game goes south, make sure your attitude doesn't. It's easy to reflect Christ well during a good game. Let your playing partner see your attitude during a difficult time.
16. During each of the 18 holes, ask one of the FORE questions (from "The Conversation" section), and listen intently.
17. On the green, don't talk to another player's golf ball, especially when it looks like it might go in the hole.
18. Don't offer golf swing advice unless you're asked for it. Just offer encouragement.

19th Hole: A Recap after the Round

1. Continue to pray for an opportunity to further build your friendship. Remember, it's all about relationships.
2. If you didn't have an opportunity on the course to interact as much as you wished, ask some of the FORE questions.
3. Pray and look for openness.
4. If time allows, invite your partner for a drink or lunch at the clubhouse.
5. Choose an appropriate gift (such as *The Mulligan* book, a pocket testament, or a Links Letter magazine).
6. Listen to their story and be prepared to share yours. Be genuine.
7. Get your partner's contact information so you can follow up. Share your business card.
8. Schedule another golf match.

Tools and Resources

There are a number of tools available to support you in your ministry of friendship to those you meet on the golf course. Our hope is that these materials will enhance the opportunities God puts

before you, whether it's the process of planting, watering, or sowing in the lives of your new friends.

The Mulligan

The Mulligan book makes it easy to follow the storyline of coming into a personal relationship with Christ. The biblical truths are clearly illustrated and explained as the analogy between God's ultimate gift of a second chance and a golf mulligan.

This is an excellent, non-threatening gift and an easy read to sow the seeds of faith, water the growing process of the reader, and reap the harvest. We have reports of people coming to faith just by reading the book.

When you give the gift of *The Mulligan* book to a friend, write a personal and encouraging message inside — “Loved the book and thought you would enjoy it too.” Giving this gift also provides an obvious opportunity for follow-up. “What did you think?” “I could identify with Paul, could you?” “Have you considered accepting the ultimate mulligan?”

The Mulligan books can be ordered at WallyArmstronggolf.com.

Links Letter Magazine

The “Links Letter” magazine profiles professional golfers while sharing their testimonies and makes a great tool for connecting with fellow golfers with the truth of the Gospel. To learn more and to obtain free copies for your personal ministry, call Links Players International at 1-800-90-LINKS or visit their website at www.linksplayers.com.

Mulligan Pocket Testament

Mulligan pocket testaments contain the Gospel of John and the steps to knowing Christ personally. This small tool helps you to clearly and succinctly share the Gospel with your partner as time and opportunity permit. If the situation doesn't allow for the two of you to sit down at the 19th hole, simply offer it as a gift. More can be ordered free of charge at www.pocketpower.org.

Websites

www.linksplayers.com
www.mulligangolfclub.com
www.oldProbooks.com
www.themulligan.org
www.searchnational.org

FCA

College Golf Fellowship

Books

Organic Outreach by Kevin Harney
Letters From a Skeptic by Gregory Boyd
About My Father's Business by Regi Campbell
Practicing the Presence of People by Mike Mason
Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis
Defending the Faith by Lee Strobel
A Case for Faith by Lee Strobel
Art of Personal Evangelism by Will McRaney
Show and Then Tell by Kent and Davidene Humphreys
Just Walk Across the Room by Bill Hybels
I'm Glad You Asked by Ken Boa and Larry Moody

We'd appreciate hearing from you! Please reach us at WallyArmstronggolf.com. We would welcome your story