

SHIFT HAPPENS

CHANGE ISN'T POLITE.
IT'S DISRUPTIVE.

RESET. REFOCUS. RISE.

JANUARY 2026

DR. MAURICE DUFFY

01 **Therapy Yourself – Why Habits Beat Hype Every Time**

02 **English Cricket Bazball,
Boredom and the Lost Art of
Virtuosity**

03 **We Keep Repairing Adults Because
We've Stopped Raising Children**

04 **You Can't See the Truth When
the Water Is Boiling**

What This eBook Is About

*If you don't own your mindset, someone else hijacks it.
Shift isn't a slogan — it's a rebellion.*

This eBook is your monthly spark: raw truths, sharp lessons, and a boot up the backside when you need it.

Written by Dr Maurice Duffy — coach to leaders, athletes, and change-makers — it's packed with real stories, sharp insights, and practical tools you can use straight away.

In future it will include contributions from other Thought Leaders Inside, you'll find hard truths, hard-won lessons, and bold prompts to shake your thinking, shift your habits, and sharpen your edge.

Why It Matters

You're tired of sugar-coated nonsense.
You want real change, not motivational wallpaper.
Good — this is where the real work begins.

“WASTE NO
MORE TIME
ARGUING ABOUT
WHAT A GOOD
MAN SHOULD BE.
BE ONE.”

Therapy Yourself – Why Habits Beat Hype Every Time

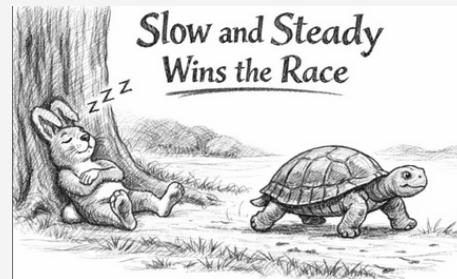
Marcus Aurelius wrote that before January gym memberships became a form of performance art. Every New Year we do the same thing. We declare war on ourselves. Big goals. Loud intentions. Grand statements about who we are about to become. Then we wonder why motivation disappears by mid-January like a politician after the photo call.

Take Joe and Mickey. Two brothers. Same DNA. Same New Year resolution. Both decided they would run a marathon. Mickey went big. He talked big. New trainers. New watch. New identity. He went out hard on day one because that's what serious people do. Ten kilometres. No warm-up. No patience. He came back exhausted but proud. It looked impressive. For about forty eight hours. By week two his legs hurt, his enthusiasm evaporated, and his trainers became aspirational furniture. Mickey said he had lost motivation. What he had really lost was a system.

Joe said almost nothing. Joe started small. He ran to work. Slowly. Easily. On good days he added a little. On bad days he protected the habit. One percent more. Not heroic. Just repeatable. Running became boring. Which is exactly why it worked.

Mickey waited to feel ready. Joe built a habit that did not require feeling anything at all.

This is where Therapy Yourself gets awkward. Behaviour beats intention every time. Your brain does not care what you promise. It responds to what you rehearse. Self-awareness is the first step. Not insight. Not labels.



Awareness. Catching the voice that says, "Go big or don't bother," and recognising it as ego dressed up as ambition. That voice is not helping you. It is entertaining itself.

Visualisation matters next. Not fantasy. Rehearsal. When you repeatedly imagine struggle, judgement, or failure, your nervous system prepares for threat. When you visualise ease, completion, and continuity, your body relaxes into action. You are training a response whether you mean to or not.

Meditation is not about becoming calm or enlightened. It is about noticing when your mind is lying to you. Ten minutes of stillness can interrupt ten hours of mental nonsense. You notice the urge to quit. You do not obey it. That is the practice.

Mickey needed motivation. Joe designed friction out of his life.

By spring, Mickey was explaining why a marathon "wasn't realistic this year." Joe never talked about the marathon at all. On race day, Joe stood on the start line. Asked how he stayed disciplined, he said, "I never trained for a marathon. I trained for Tuesday."

As Aristotle put it, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Therapy Yourself is not dramatic. It is unglamorous. It is awareness before ambition. Visualisation before effort. Meditation before momentum.

Then stop talking about the year you want. Let us write it properly.

**“IF IT IS
TO MEAN
ANYTHING,
IT MUST
BE
UNCOMFORTABLE.”**

English Cricket Bazball, Boredom and the Lost Art of Virtuosity

I am no expert on Cricket but have worked through three Ashes with the Australian team players on mindset.

English cricket has just completed an Ashes tour that ended 4–1 to Australia. That score line is the polite version. The impolite version is that England spent much of the series looking like a team trying to win a pub quiz by shouting the answers louder.

This tour was not lost on talent. It was lost on habits, assumptions, and a culture that mistakes vibe for standards. Bazball has been sold as liberation, until you realise that liberation without discipline is just chaos with a marketing budget. Start with preparation, because it matters, and because England treated it like an optional add-on. The warm-up debate was dismissed as nostalgia from men who think foam rollers are woke. But this was never about tradition. It was about adaptation. Australian conditions do not reward theories. They reward proof.

That second Test in Brisbane was always going to reveal whether England had trained for the exam they turned up to sit. Perth. Then a day-night Test at the Gabba. Then Adelaide. None of this was a surprise. Yet England played like a team revising by watching motivational videos.

Bazball itself is not the problem. Turning it into a personality is. England did not play aggressively. They played automatically. Aggression is a choice. Automatic aggression is a habit. Australia anticipated it and dismantled it calmly. Ask any Australian I have coached and they will mention my "dig-in" philosophy. It is not glamorous. It does not trend.



You adapt first, then you grind. Quietly. Relentlessly. In first gear if necessary, until the other side loses patience, discipline, and shape.

Australians are comfortable with boredom. They do not confuse entertainment with effectiveness. England treated first gear as a moral failure. Batting time became a betrayal of brand values.

Dropped catches were blamed on luck, which is always the refuge of teams unwilling to discuss standards. Steve Smith took 14 catches. Dropped catches are not unlucky. They are unpaid invoices. Australia always collect.

By the time England finally won a Test, Australia had already retained the Ashes. The win was hailed as proof of concept, which is a bit like applauding the lifeboat drill after the ship has sunk. Now comes the review. If it is to mean anything, it must be uncomfortable. It must examine habits, not headlines. Marginal gains. Boring excellence. Relentless standards.

Which is precisely why it probably will not happen with the ruthless elimination of every 1% that effects performance and every habit that does not build performance.

“IT’S EASIER TO
BUILD STRONG
CHILDREN THAN
REPAIR BROKEN
ADULTS.”

We Keep Repairing Adults Because We've Stopped Raising Children

That line is shared endlessly. Liked. Saved. Forgotten. Then we scroll on and wonder why boardrooms, parliaments and comment sections resemble badly supervised playgrounds.

Most of my work now-- with leaders, teams, patients -- isn't about strategy or performance. It's about repair. Quiet, expensive repair of things that were never meant to break in the first place. Ian Robertson's neuroscience explains why. His argument isn't soft or sentimental. It's blunt: early wiring doesn't get overwritten -- it gets managed.

Childhood experiences wire baseline emotional responses. How quickly you feel threatened. How you respond to criticism. How much control you need to feel safe. Those circuits don't disappear when you grow up, get educated or gain status. Adult learning sits on top of them — it doesn't erase them. That's why highly intelligent adults still react childishly under pressure.

Power doesn't fix this. It amplifies it. If you want a global case study, look at Trump. Strip away politics and you're left with psychology. Endless validation-seeking. Zero tolerance for criticism. Public tantrums reframed as strength. Power used not to serve, but to soothe insecurity. That isn't an anomaly. It's an extreme, highly visible version of what happens when early emotional wiring meets unchecked authority. And we keep calling this "leadership style". Meanwhile, parenting has been quietly outsourced. To screens. To schools. To algorithms.

To the hope that resilience will just happen while adults stay busy. We've replaced presence with productivity, boredom with stimulation, boundaries with distraction.

Children cope. Until they don't. Social media pours petrol on it. Constant comparison. No stillness. No private self. No chance to learn who you are without an audience. The inner child doesn't mature -- it performs.

By adulthood, the repair bill arrives. Burnout. Anxiety. Bullying cultures. Leaders who look decisive but panic under challenge. Organisations run by people who need applause more than truth. So here we are, coaching adults back to basics. Teaching senior leaders what toddlers are meant to learn: how to wait, how to self-regulate, how to hear "no" without imploding, how to tolerate discomfort without reaching for control. We don't need better leadership programmes.

We need fewer damaged children. That means doing the unfashionable thing: showing up, staying present, tolerating discomfort, and accepting that parenting isn't something you outsource without consequences.

You always pay later. Just ask the adults we keep trying to repair.

"It's easier to build strong children than repair broken adults."



“CALM IS NOT
WEAKNESS.
CALM IS
PRECISION.
IF YOU WANT
THE TRUTH, YOU
HAVE TO BE
ABLE TO SEE
YOURSELF.”

You Can't See the Truth When the Water Is Boiling

There is a story I often come back to when people tell me they are certain they are right.

A woman I worked with once described a morning she still regrets.

Her teenage son had been drifting. Late nights. Missed classes. Shrugs where answers should have been. That morning he came down late again, hoodie up, headphones in, already halfway out the door.

She exploded.

Not loudly. Worse. Controlled fury. Precise words aimed to hurt. A list of failures delivered with surgical efficiency. She told him he was wasting his potential, disrespecting the family, throwing away opportunities others would kill for.

He stood there. Took it. Left without a word.--The kitchen went quiet.

The kettle was still boiling. Screaming, furious, unchecked. She lifted it off the heat and, without knowing why, looked down into the water.

She expected to see herself.- She didn't! The surface was chaos. Bubbles breaking into each other. No stillness. No shape. No reflection. Just movement pretending to be energy. And in that moment, something landed.

She understood that while the water was boiling, she had been unrecognisable — to him, and to herself. She had no idea what she had just looked like to him either. When the water finally settled, her reflection crept back. Not the version she wanted. Tired. Frightened. Tight around the eyes.



A woman who loved her son deeply and was terrified she was losing him. Anger does this. It convinces us we are seeing clearly when we are blind. It feels like certainty, but it is just heat.

Biology takes over. Threat mode. Narrowed focus. Certainty without accuracy. Anger is not insight. It is a signal. It tells you something matters. Something feels out of control. Something hurts. But it is not a set of instructions. The mistake is acting while the water is still boiling.

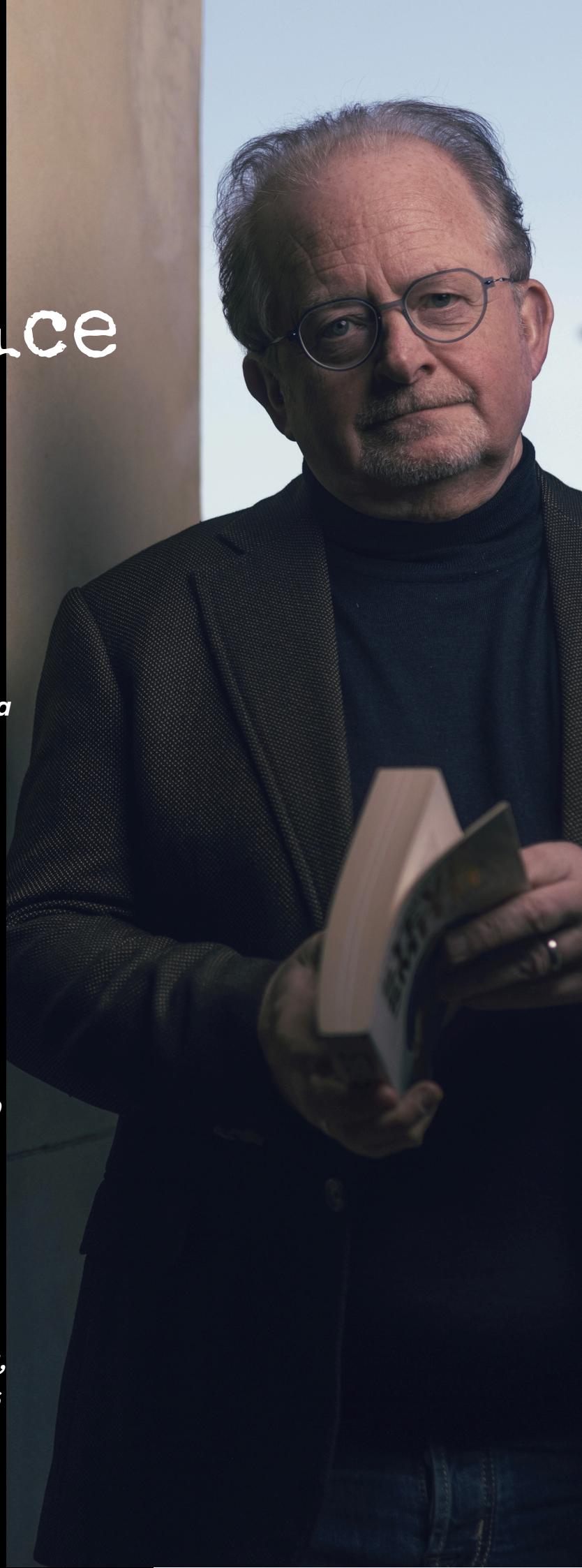
Later that evening, she waited. Let the heat drain from her body. Let the reflection remain. When he came home, she didn't lecture. She didn't correct. She told the truth instead. "I was scared," she said. "And I took it out on you."

It didn't fix everything. But it stopped the moment hardening into something permanent.

Calm is not weakness. Calm is precision. If you want the truth, you have to be able to see yourself. And you cannot do that while the water is boiling.

Keep Connected with Maurice

Dr. Maurice Duffy is a globally recognised mindset coach, leadership expert, and motivational speaker with over 30 years of experience in transformative change. He serves as a Visiting Professor of Innovation and Transformation and Entrepreneur in Residence at the University of Sunderland, as well as this Dr. Duffy is a Visiting Professor at the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean. He has worked with a diverse range of clients, including global corporations such as Google, Sony, Coca-Cola, Siemens, HSBC UK, P&G, Barclays, JP Morgan, BP, and AXA. His expertise extends to elite sports, having coached international teams and athletes like the Australian Cricket Captain Steve Smith, Durham Cricket Club, Ryder Cup players, and Premiership football players. Additionally, he has advised political figures in Westminster, Washington, and Durban, and has served as Advisor to the Mongolian Government. Beyond coaching, Dr. Duffy is a bestselling author, columnist, and BBC presenter. He regularly shares insights on mindset and personal development through his blog and social media platforms.





In Dr Maurice Duffy Coaching, discover the raw truth behind elite performance.

No fluff. No excuses. Just real stories, sharp provocations, and practical tools from one of the world's top mindset coaches.

Whether you lead a boardroom, a battlefield, or your own chaotic life, Shift Coaching challenges your thinking, confronts your habits, and rewires your mental game. It's for the doers, the dreamers, and the disrupters. Success isn't luck — it's mindset. And mindset is a choice.

Choose yours. Start now.

Connect with Dr Maurice Duffy

 **Website:** www.mauriceduffy.com

 **Email:** media@mauriceduffy.com

 **Phone:** +44 7922 406 765

 **X (formerly Twitter):** [@DrMauriceDuffy](https://twitter.com/DrMauriceDuffy)

 **Instagram:** [@drmauriceduffy](https://www.instagram.com/drmauriceduffy)

 **LinkedIn:** [@Dr Maurice Duffy](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-maurice-duffy)