



## Controlling & Improving Tilt

My first two articles narrowed down the definition of tilt, helped you create a tilt profile, described the seven types of tilt, and provided a framework for you to begin controlling tilt at the table. This article is all about helping you take more control of tilt when you play and, moreover, your expectations while your tilt is improving so you keep making progress.

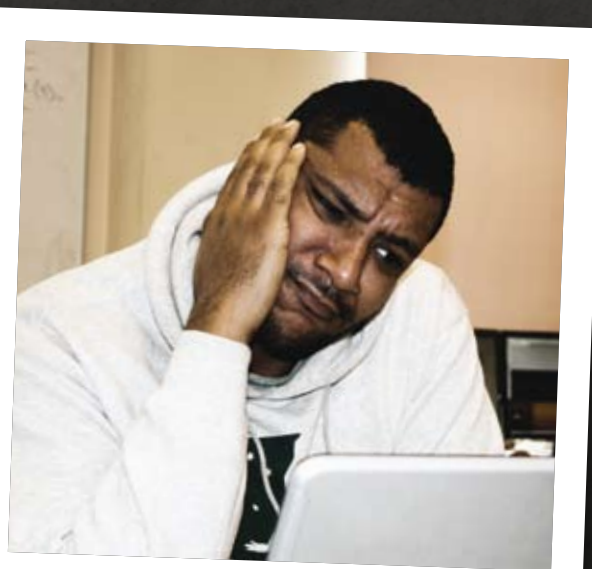


**T**ilt is a complex issue. On forums and in client sessions, poker players often wish there was a magic cure for tilt, or there was something that I could say to make them permanently tilt free. Believe me if I had that kind of power I'd be selling it, you would have already heard about it, and I'd be retired by now. Quick fixes only exist for

simple problems; tilt is not one of them. Since a quick fix isn't going to happen, one of the most important and overlooked skills becomes your ability to recognize progress so you keep making it. You already know how to do this in poker, but the mental game is different. Why is it so important to be able to recognize that you are making progress with tilt? If you don't realize you are improving, you'll stop doing what you were doing to improve and go look for something else. This is totally reasonable. It would be ridiculous to keep doing something that isn't working. Except, because the mental game is different, far too often poker players don't even realize that they

### INJECT LOGIC THOUGHT

- 1) Recognize
- 2) Deep breath
- 3) Inject logic
- 4) Refocus on playing well
- 5) Repeat as often as necessary



GOING....

are in fact making progress and subsequently stop doing something that is working.

The expectation that improving tilt is easy is the biggest thing that throws people off and stunts their progress with tilt. Tilt control is a skill just like any other skill, so the first sign of improvement is always increased awareness.

### THE FIRST STEP IS INCREASED AWARENESS

The first sign that you're making progress with tilt is often just the ability to better spot your pattern of tilt playing out in real time. That means you've spotted a trigger, such as a bad beat, a mistake, or a trash talking player. Or a tendency, such as frustration in your head, playing weak hands out of position, or calling another player an

idiot. However, just because you've spotted it, it does not mean you are able to control tilt yet. Before you can control tilt by "Injecting Logic," you have to be able to spot your pattern of tilt so you know to do it.

As ridiculously simple as that sounds, players far too often fail to realize they are making progress just by better spotting the subtle signs of tilt. Is this the end goal? Absolutely not, but it's an important first step that eventually leads to greater control of tilt.

### KEY POINT:

Running away from tilt is not the answer. To overcome the problem you have to put this knowledge into practice at the table.

### THE SECOND STEP IS INCREASED CONTROL

Now that you are able to recognize the signs of tilt before your emotions rise too high and shut down your ability to think clearly, "Injecting Logic" can help you control tilt. The "Inject the Logic" process described in the last article is a simple yet powerful tool to control tilt, but as players frequently comment, it does not eliminate the emotion entirely. Instead it stops tilt from getting worse and helps them to put it out of their mind when they play so they can get back to playing well.

That is until the next tilt trigger hits you. For that reason it's likely that you'll have to "Inject the Logic" repeatedly throughout the session or tournament after each trigger hits. While that may seem tough, "Injecting Logic" is a skill so it gets easier the more you do it. Each time you use it successfully, you build the mental muscle required to remain in control and prevent tilt.

### SPOTTING TILT PROGRESS

Since there will still be times where you fail to control tilt, by spotting any of these six things it'll be easier to stick with the plan so you can keep making progress:

## Building More Awareness

To really control tilt you need more awareness. To build more awareness you need to create a cycle of constant improvement. Here's how:

**AFTER THE SESSION** – Take notes about the subtle signs of tilt you spotted while playing. Reinforcing them again helps you to learn. You may also spot new ones, and, if you do, add them to your Tilt Profile. Also think back and evaluate how well the

"Inject the Logic" process worked to see if it created any of the six signs of progress from this article.

**BEFORE YOU PLAY** – Before you sit down to play, carefully review your Tilt Profile, the "Inject the Logic" process – especially the logic statement and the technical aspects of your game to improve – and any other details or goals that will help you to remain in control of tilt. Doing this will keep your

overall tilt strategy fresh in your mind, so it is easier to control tilt during the session.

**DURING THE SESSION** – Keep a sharp eye out for the signs of tilt and immediately take action – "Inject the Logic" – when they show up. Also consider taking notes about the hand (or just marking it if you play online with a database), so you can evaluate the hand for poker mistakes and signs of tilt after the session. >>



## 1 - PLAYING LONGER

For players who quit at the first sign of tilt, "Injecting Logic" is designed to help you stay at the table longer. You can't improve tilt just from the rail. You have to be able to sit there and take a barrage of beats and not go on tilt. Even just 5 more minutes is progress. May not seem like much, but if you can do 5 minutes, getting to 10 minutes just got easier and before you know it, you'll be playing through a downswing without having to constantly quit.

## 2 - PLAYING BETTER

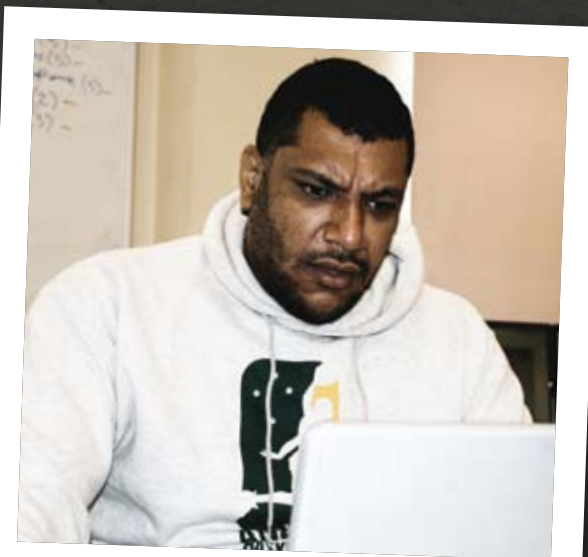
Making sure that you aren't playing too many hands, calling down too much, trying to win too many pots, bluffing too much, or any of the other technical aspects of your game is a key part of "Injecting the Logic" - (Inject the Logic boxout

- Step #4). It's not enough to just be playing longer; you need to be playing well. Recognizing that you actually are playing well, at a time you typically wouldn't, is proof you're in more control of tilt.

## 3 - QUITTING QUICKER

Players who play too long when tilting, frequently talk about how they often know they 'should' quit, but can't. With increased awareness for your pattern of tilt, that voice gets stronger and stronger and eventually leads to you quitting when it's no longer profitable to be playing. How quickly you can quit is something to measure, and is an indication of progress controlling tilt. If it previously took you 3+ hours

to quit when you knew you should, and now it only takes 30 minutes, that's major progress. The next step of course is decreasing the time even more.



GOING....



GOING....

## 4 - SHORTER RECOVERY DURING THE SESSION

After you've used the "Inject the Logic" process, you can't expect to instantly jump back to playing perfectly again. You have to work your way back up to playing well. The amount of time it takes to get back playing well is another measure of tilt control.

## 5 - SHORTER RECOVERY AFTER THE SESSION

Another way you can spot improvement is to see how quickly you recover and feel normal after you do tilt. Very often tilt lingers well after the session, weighing on your mind, making you sleep poorly and even still being down or frustrated the next time you go to play. That means you haven't recovered yet. Players making

progress with tilt, feel better faster. So what previously took until the next morning to feel better, now takes two hours or even just thirty minutes.

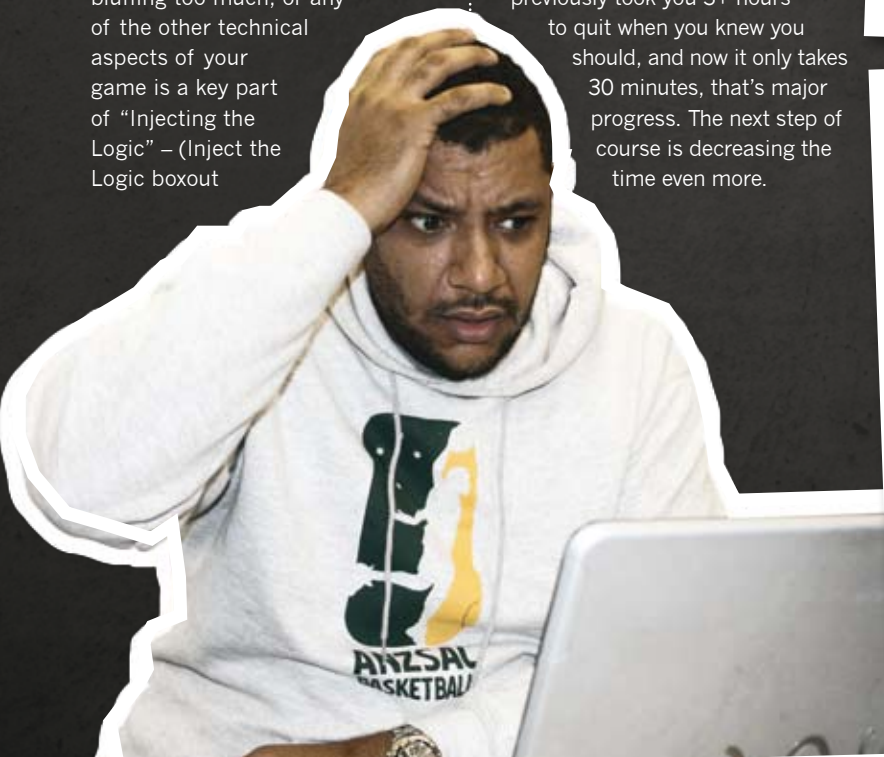
## 6 - SMALLER REACTION

When a trigger of tilt hits you hard, it's like a bomb going off. When the intensity of that reaction or the anger that you immediately feel begins to decrease, that's another sign you are actually resolving the underlying cause of your tilt. It's for that reason that this is the last thing to improve. Once you see this happening, you are well on your way to solving your tilt problem.

**KEY POINT:** Just like poker, the theory behind tilt can take a few sessions to understand. But to really master it, it takes a little longer.

Completely overcoming your issues with tilt is a complex process which is fraught with bumps and setbacks. The process is far more gradual than many players realize. It's more like chopping down a huge tree with an axe. As much as you'd like to have a chainsaw to take it out easily, that's not how it works. Each time you play it gives you the opportunity to build the mental muscle to take it down.

I hope this and the previous two articles have given you the information you need to take tilt head on. Since only simple problems have simple answers, successfully overcoming tilt is so rewarding because not only will it improve your enjoyment of the game, it will also give you a massive edge over your opponents. **WPT**



GONE!

## 4 Reasons "Injecting the Logic" Didn't Work

- 1) You didn't catch tilt early enough and your emotional level was too high, even though it might not have felt that way.
- 2) Your "Injecting Logic" statement isn't strong enough to knock some sense into you.
- 3) The analysis of your pattern of tilt was not complete enough or something new threw you off.
- 4) Your emotional reaction was so severe you tilted instantly and had no chance of "Injecting Logic."