

# Jared Tendler

## Session One: Learning to Learn

*Jared Tendler is a "mental game coach" to poker players and golfers, helping professionals to work on the emotional and psychological aspects of their games. We sent him the Ogmores Poker Tour's Lee Davy, who has played the odd mental game of his own and is much in need of emotional healing, to see if he could be cured of his overwhelming tilt.*

**"You don't really understand something until you can explain it to your grandmother." – Albert Einstein**

I christened my poker playing mate Terry Welsh "The Run". This is not because of his ability to run the 800 metres faster than Steve Cram. In fact, I doubt he could even manage a 20-yard sprint without his lungs capitulating. No, the legendary Terry Welsh is called The Run because of his amazing ability to have a straight, always.

"What have you got, Terry?"

"The run," he says nonchalantly.

Bobby Eggs always has a king in his hand and plays it as though he has the nuts even if it is K-2os. Tony "The Raincloud of Doom" Thorne always plays any hand with a queen in it. Eddie "The Ace" always has an ace. Gary "The Sleeper" Acreman only wakes up to play one hand in a hundred. And Steve "The Rock" John did not get his nickname because he is a geologist.

Armed with all of this knowledge, you may think any decent poker player would be able to adapt to these respective playing styles. Well, welcome to the mind of Lee Davy. But before you step in, I must warn you that there is a violent war going on inside this mind. A war between Rational Mind and Emotional Mind, and right now Emotional Mind has just kicked Rational Mind in the nuts and dropped his guts all over the floor.

In an effort to help poor old Rational Mind out and bring some sanity into my life at the same time, I sought out the help of the poker world's current big thing, Jared Tendler. After all, Jared has been responsible for improving the game of the legendary Dusty "Leatherass" Schmidt. He's also the mental game coach for over 160 poker players from 21 different countries, and I was interested to learn just what it is that Jared is doing to improve the win-rates of these players. The testimonials were excellent, so I decided to give him a call.

The work starts before we even talk when I am emailed a questionnaire. There are 32 questions in total. I imagine it is an important step for Jared to create a profile of his latest client – after all, there are a bloody lot of them. Questionnaires are usually a chore but this one was different. It got you thinking about your game straight away. I actually enjoyed completing it.

We hooked up via Skype. Both of us recorded the conversation and this is very important. There's no way that you can remember all the important things that Jared tells you. Recording the conversation allows you to listen to it over and over again, to ensure it sticks.

It strikes me immediately that he's a very good speaker. Later, as I type up the transcript of our conversation, I realise all of his sentences make sense and are concise, whereas mine are all over the place. He thinks before speaking and doesn't waste one drop of energy in the process. You can tell right away that he knows what he is talking about.

So what did I learn?

In the first session, Jared gets to know you a little bit better. After all, this is the first discussion he has had with his client. The main principle behind session one was for him to explain to me the theory behind the processes in the brain that are essential for learning. This was an important discussion. I had been playing poker regularly for over 18 months and was still a losing player. I had watched training videos, read poker books and played countless hours of poker and I couldn't understand why I was still losing.



Jared helped me to understand that the movement of learning is fluid. You have to keep pace with it. He took me through the Adult Learning Model and explained the four different stages of that process. I will very, very briefly explain them below.

### Unconscious Incompetence

You are playing poker and are completely unaware how bad you really are.

### Conscious Incompetence

You have just become aware that you are crap at playing poker.

### Conscious Competence

You now have the ability to be good at poker. You know where you suck and what to do about it.

### Unconscious Competence

You are Phil Ivey! Everything comes naturally to you. You are not even aware that you are thinking, you are just doing!

Jared taught me to see that most of my game is somewhere in the consciously incompetent stage - that I am lost and haven't got any directions. He helped me understand that I have a flaw in my learning style. Once I have become aware of something, I believe I own it. I feel have solved the problem instantaneously. I view awareness of a problem as the primary solution.

*I think it, I am it!*

Jared also got me to understand how important small details are. I am looking for big changes and they are not happening because changes in poker happen after an accumulation of a shitload of small stuff. He made me understand that I need to be aware of the massive amount of small detail in poker. Only by being aware of this will I be able to track my progress; to look back and see how far I have managed to come.

*You are eager to win the lottery of your own life.*

Jared also helped me to see that I was desperate. I was desperate for validation. I knew that I had some ability and potential. But I was desperate to turn that potential into something real and tangible. *NOW!*

This is not easy; it is not 1+1. If it were I would have all the answers by now. Jared taught me to see that ease is relative to the person. For me, this was very difficult to absorb.

I now have to navigate my way from Conscious Incompetence, into the choppy waters of Conscious Competence, until I finally reach the land of Unconscious Competence. Unfortunately for me, I only have four sessions with Jared in which to try to squeeze out the maximum value. I am afraid I will only get to see the tip of the iceberg.

After the session, I listen to the recording. I transcribe our conversation and take out the important parts, writing them down on a separate piece of paper. This is an important process. You start to become more aware that you are crap, and strangely this has made me feel calmer within myself. I have nothing to worry about anymore and I have Jared to thank for that.

Previously I was worried because I didn't understand what the hell was going on. It seems so obvious now, but it wasn't at the time.

The other good thing about Jared is he is in no hurry to get anywhere fast. His biggest challenge with me is to slow me down. I am after all a "premature master". He brings me back down to earth. The session whizzed by. I can't wait for the next one to begin.

Premature master? He must have read my wife's mind. She has always said that I am premature. She says I suffer from "Video Syndrome".

Slam it in!

Fast Forward!

And...

Eject! ♠

*Jared Tendler is the mental game coach for over 160 poker players from 21 countries. To find out more about him or his upcoming book visit [www.jaredtendlerpoker.com](http://www.jaredtendlerpoker.com).*