

**WARNING: The thoughts expressed in this article have not been approved by the ACBL, the RDBC or by Ann Van Ryn.**

Many of our club members are involved with CHAT Bridge. Ann Van Ryn has had a key part in CHAT since its inception. She listened to the attendees and found that they wanted a game of their own. She surveyed the group and they chose Thursdays. Done. She is there on Thursdays and is studying to become a director so she can run that game. Additionally, she works with and is in charge of a two session tournament that Jade Barrett runs here twice a year.

We owe Ann a debt of thanks for her efforts. Ann's contributions outside of CHAT Bridge are many as well. She hosted all the Life Master parties (many) for the club until we moved to Hadley Creek. She ordered and picked up the Wednesday birthday cakes for years. She served on the RDBC board 3 different times including being president. She has done much more but that's enough accolades for one person. I need to say something about the current CHAT sessions (which shows another of Ann's contributions).

At many CHAT tables I hear a lot of "I did it wrong", I bid it wrong or I played it wrong. Their face shows the disappointment/confusion they are feeling.

Too often, we are too hard on ourselves. Sometimes we played it well and end up with a negative score. It looks bad, but we generally don't really know at the table. We play three hearts. It goes down two tricks. The defenders are trying to hide that smug look about their defensive prowess. We are trying to hide our embarrassment of our weak play. Not fun.

But, three hearts, down two might be what is happening at several tables. The decisions we make at the bridge table are often difficult. Let's not invoke the "I screwed up" conclusion too quickly. Better to start thinking about the next hand as soon as possible. If you continue to be troubled by this hand, it will make your play at the next hand more accident prone.

Enough positivism. Sometimes it is clear cut. **You did screw up.** You know it. Your partner knows it. The opponents know it. If you react too radically, the tables around you will also know it. You notice that your opponents are being extremely thoughtful and considerate (just what you need at this moment – Pity). You messed up! BUT the same advice applies. NEXT HAND! Put it behind you and start the next hand as quickly as you can.

If the frustration just won't go away, you might try a technique that Ann has endorsed. Go to the rest room and CRY (try not to cry at the table).

Do whatever you have to do to put it behind you. I considered trying Ann's suggestion once, but as I thought about it, I started to laugh. That worked better than crying anyway.

It is hard to believe that I am advising people on this? I don't always follow this advice myself. But I am working on how to handle my disappointments at the table. I try to keep in mind how funny this mistake is going to be when I talk about it a week or two from now. Hopefully, this gaffe will reduce the chance of me making this mistake again.

Every club member experiences this on occasion. There are a lot of smart people in our club (like: all of them). Have you noticed that? We have different levels of play (strata), but there is no "slow" section. If it was easy, it wouldn't be any fun. We might as well just work on our UNO prowess.

*Arne Fackler*