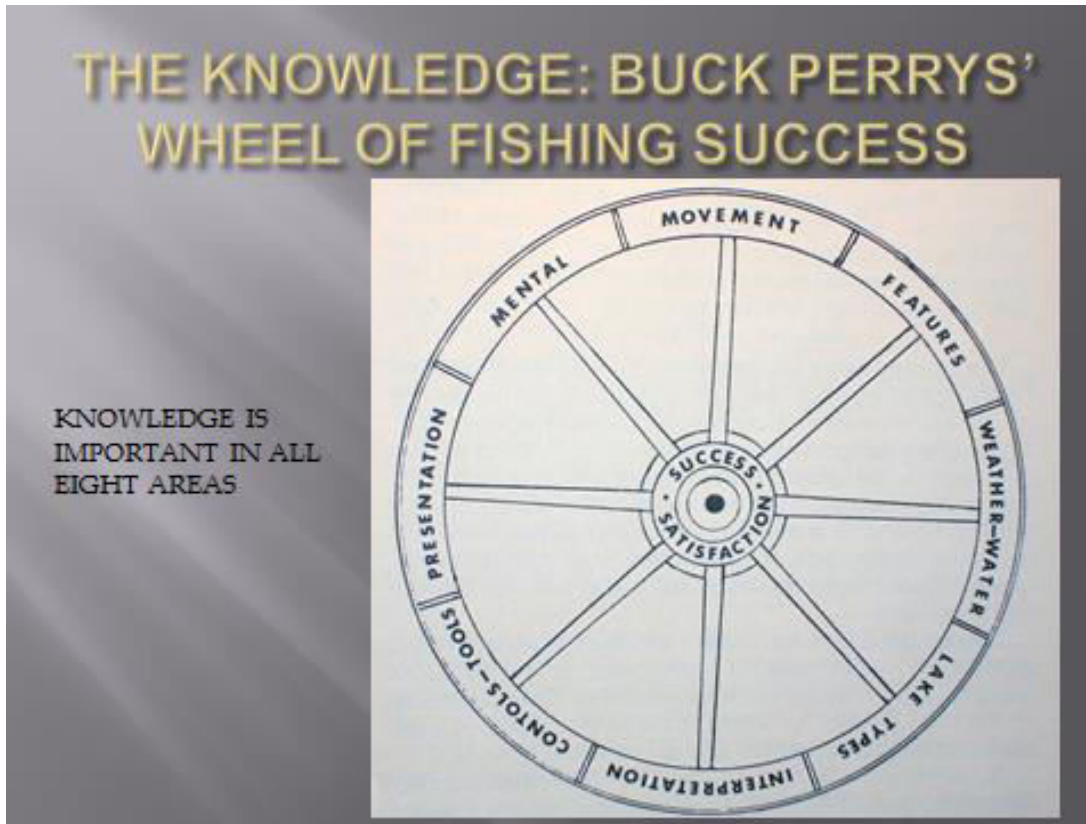


## “FISHING ESSENTIALS”



What **areas** of information are **most important** to becoming a better fisherman? **Knowledge is the key** to success and satisfaction in any endeavor we choose in life, including fishing. We can never fully learn all there is to know about fishing, as it is a **lifetime learning process**. Those who claim to know it all have stopped learning, and are doomed to decline in their fishing. But what knowledge can we count on? There is so much information on fishing out there that it seems overwhelming! The answer is to **select information** that has been tried and **proven over many years**. One such body of knowledge about fish behavior and fishing was developed by Elwood “Buck” Perry, the “Father of Modern Day Structure Fishing”. He was a college physics professor that studied fish behavior over many years through the scientific method, and developed an approach to fishing that takes advantage of that knowledge. His studies included behavior of all species of gamefish, all types of waters, and under all weather and water conditions. He discovered **what a fisherman must do** to make fish reflex strike our lures.

**Is there a “magic bullet”** category of knowledge that we can hone right in on to quickly become a great fisherman? Not really. Mr Perry has stated that there are to **8 areas of learning essential to becoming a better fisherman**: 1) Basic Movements of Fish 2) Structure, Breaks, and Breaklines 3) Weather and Water Color 4) Controls and Tools 5) Presentation of Lures 6) Lake Types 7) Mapping and Interpretation and 8) Mental Aspects. They all are important to know about, but if we were to select one area to begin, it would be the study of the **Basic Movements of Fish**. This is necessary to begin learning about where the fish might be, and how they react to their environment. One of the first things deer hunters learn about their quarry is how deer behave, and where they are likely to be found. Fish move along pathways like deer, and the next area of knowledge to learn about would be **Structure, Breaks, and Breaklines**, which fish use in their movements and migrations. Structure is the bottom of the lake that is different from the surrounding area, and it is where we need to spend most of our time fishing to have the best chance to catch a fish.

The third area of study recommended would be that of **Weather and Water Color**. Understanding **Weather** and how the cold front affects fish behavior helps to put us on the water at the right time. Fishing waters with more stained **Water Color** allows fish to come shallower and therefore be more easily caught. Because bright sunlight affects fish, clear water keeps fish deeper with shorter movements in both distance and time, making catching fish much more difficult. For that reason, the single most important thing we can do to increase our catches is to fish more stained water. The next important area to study would be to learn about **Controls and Tools**. Of the 5 lure **Controls** we have to trigger fish to strike (depth, speed, color, size, and action), depth and speed are by far the most important. **Depth** is where the fish are, not just in feet, but where on the lake bottom at that depth. This changes as the fish move about. **Speed** is the velocity that the lure moves through the water. The trigger speed varies from dead bait to a fast troll, and also changes for the fish, depending on the weather and water conditions at that time. To thoroughly fish a structure, we must check all depths and all speeds on that structure with our lures, both casting and trolling, which is not an easy task. This brings us to learning about efficient **Tools** needed to do the job correctly (rods, reels, lines, lures, etc.). Proper tools are mostly designed to accurately control the depth and speed of our lures.

The fifth area of knowledge would be **Lure Presentation**. We are now starting to put together the knowledge of the previous subjects to best plan what we do on the water to catch fish. Presenting lures properly requires knowledge in all of the above subjects, and Mr. Perry has given us specific guidelines to follow in his material. As we go further into our study of fishing, learning the different **Lake Types** is the next step, requiring knowledge of the different types of waters, rivers, and reservoirs, what type of structures each contains, seasonal variations, and what we can expect in each. Finally, **Mapping and Interpretation** requires the accumulation of all the knowledge we have acquired to learn the details of each structure and locate the specific spot (contact point) where fish move up on it from the deep water. This is the area of fishing knowledge where we can always get better, because each structure is uniquely different. The **Mental Aspects** of learning to fish rely mostly on our attitude and motivation to want to catch fish, and a belief in the system of knowledge we are using. Fear or lack of confidence in our fishing ability is directly related to the lack of knowledge we have. The anxiety we have from this lack of knowledge is what we want to get rid of so we can go fishing in a relaxed, organized manner. Learning what is in Buck Perrys' book "Spoonplugging—Your Guide to Lunger Catches" gives us the knowledge and confidence to go out on the water, get the experience, and catch more and larger fish!

**Chase Klinesteker, Certified Spoonplugging Instructor**