



The Kings Plan “Königsplan”

In several years of research, Grandmaster Stefan Kindermann, Professor Robert von Weizsäcker and Dijana Dengler have investigated the most effective strategies of the chess grandmasters. Their model The King’s Plan enables you to adopt their techniques, which have been forged in world-class chess and have stood the test of time for centuries, and make use of them both professionally and privately. What makes The King’s Plan unique is that it links a structured and rational approach with intuitive elements. Only merging a clear systematic approach with our emotional-intuitive powers enables us to think, plan and act in a masterly way. For the first time, concrete techniques are shown by which we can put this insight to practice.

Overview – The Seven Steps:

1. Begin in Best Form

The optimal mind-set is a vital prerequisite for every top performance. Here, it is all about finding a direct and integral access to our personal resources. This will inspire both intuition and reason and help harmonise them.

2. Embrace the Present

A meticulous stocktaking ensures that, first and foremost, we are grounded in the here and now before we start making any plans for the future. We will take stock of existing problems and resources and dissect a complex situation into single components. At this stage, imagination has to wait: what is really there? What can I rely on? In stages 3-6, intuition will come into its own. It will play a crucial role at the beginning as well as at the end of the planning, validating and decision-making process. The King’s Plan model embeds intuition into a rational structure, guides it towards critical points and probes it thoroughly.

3. Creative Cycle

The technique presented here is an adoption of a principal thinking scheme of the chess grandmasters. First, it produces creative ideas and gives room for imagination and intuition. Complementing this, and equally important, the ideas

found come under close scrutiny straight away. The third step is a realistic synthesis of the pros and cons. As a result, the new ideas generated will have a solid foundation. Faced with problems of a more complex order, this step will narrow down the choices for the next step.

4. Sensible Search

The forward thinking algorithm leads step by step from where we are towards different future scenarios, comparing and evaluating them. We can “cut off” branches with a relatively unfavourable outcome and thus quickly gain a clear overview of our possible actions and their consequences. We start with a higher-level, macro-strategic approach and analyse details only later if needed. We also set red flags that hint to a necessary change of plans along the way. This forward-oriented approach is indispensable if there is no clear goal yet.

5. Good Goals

Here it is all about purposefully and precisely defining your goal. Finding your goal using precise criteria about what you want to accomplish is a crucial condition for successful planning and can be imagined as a stocktaking that has been projected into the future. If the goal has not been clearly defined or cannot be intuitively described, steps 3 and 4 will help us do this.

6. Back along the Timeline

The backwards-thinking algorithm takes the final goal as a starting point. From this future vision, we move backwards along the timeline, via several intermediate goals, back to the here and now. In cases where the goal is clear, this approach can be superior to the traditional approach from step 4. Testing goals can be an important resource. We suppose a goal we have found intuitively can be reached. We verify this by examining all the intermediate goals. Only if it is possible to reach the intermediate goals will the end goal be a realistic one. Employing both step 4 and 6 combined is very important. Often it is exactly where the forward and backward timelines meet that an immediate solution to a complex problem will spring to mind.

7. Rewarding Reflection

After a project that has been planned and prepared is finally realised, it has to be reviewed in a critical and constructive way. In this review, we will manage possible setbacks in a constructive manner, put the experiences made into perspective and draw energy from our achievements. If, during the course of a complex planning, one of the intermediate steps proves to be especially tough, we can isolate this problem from the bigger structure and apply the King’s Plan

steps to it in isolation. After it has been solved, we can re-insert it into the original structure.

The King's plan for kids

Our chess foundation (Münchener Schachstiftung) supports up to 1,300 children in socially deprived areas every year, as well as people with physical disabilities, sick children and young people, unaccompanied young refugees, children from Ukraine or needy senior citizens.

The great value of good chess training for school children has been clearly proven by more than 50 studies worldwide. The ability to concentrate, creativity and also social competence are effectively promoted. With our didactic concept "King's Plan for Children" we even go one step further.

The "King's Plan for Children" initially introduces children to chess in a particularly playful and lively way. The idea being, beyond the general benefits of chess, to give them concrete methods that are useful in school and in life. There are many interactive elements such as concentration games or chess theater.

If a child cannot solve a task, he or she is given a crown and sceptre and can get an advisor from the class to solve the problem together. This is good for self-confidence and strengthens cohesion in the class. And for many exercises the kids are playing the pieces and becoming kings or rooks while the real chess scenario is shown at the demonstration board.

Then we have our Chess Yoga that fits accordingly with the first step of the Königsplan "begin in best form" as the personal shape is a very important prerequisite for any successful activity.

What is important from the very start when you teach the rules: to put them immediately into a context of meaning and combine them with first exercises in thinking. Even with the kings only its possible to train some important aspects of chess thinking like planning some moves ahead and changing perspective by seeing through the eyes of the other person or to introduce elements like Zugzwang!

After the children have learned and really internalized the rules of chess, the next phase begins. Then the decisive goal is to teach them important thinking strategies and problem-solving skills that they can use in a very concrete way in their everyday school life and also in their private life, whether it's about the

next text problem in math or they have stress in the schoolyard that they can cope with better through a targeted change of perspective.

In the concentration game, the children have two minutes to memorize a position that matches their level of knowledge.

This is much more than a memory exercise, because with more complex positions it is crucial to quickly understand what the really important elements are and what it is actually about.

How do we proceed mentally here? First, we should be in as good a state as possible - stage 1. Then, stage 2 is a calm and clear stocktaking, before we move on to concrete ideas. What is the material balance, how are the kings?

Stage 3 and 4 corresponds to classic forward thinking in variants -what ideas are there, and what happens afterwards, how will the other person behave? But then follows the backward thinking starting from the goal, the vision: what is my vision and what must have happened before that.

The solution emerges almost by itself when we combine both approaches! Such a thinking routine should become self-perpetuating over time and be transferred to many other areas of school and life with practical examples!

Above all, the children develop self-confidence, they experience that they can also solve tricky problems systematically and that this is even fun! The most important thing, however, is to show children who are having a hard time in life that we believe in them and thus give them faith in themselves! This is the most valuable gift we can give them through the medium of chess and our King's Plan for children!

Stefan Kindermann

More information and lectures can be found here:

www.koenigsplan.com/?lang=en (English)

www.koenigsplan.com (German)

www.schachstiftung-muenchen.de (German)