

# What is Archery, Anyway?

*Just what is archery? I guess that it depends on who you ask.*

*Is it a sport?*

*A recreation activity?*

*A martial art?*

*A spiritual activity?*

*A physical discipline?*

*A moral discipline?*

*An ethical study?*

*Or is it something else?*

I believe that the activity of shooting the bow and arrow is whatever the shooter needs or desires it to be. That is one of the things that makes archery so appealing to such a diverse group of people in every culture and on every continent.

So, archery is what you make it. Every person who participates has their own reasons, goals, and desires when it comes to their personal shooting. Some crave competition, others enjoy it as a recreational pastime, and still others seek a more metaphysical path. Whatever your reasons, they are correct for you. That is all that matters. It is not important what your friends think about your reasons for enjoying archery. Not everyone has the same drive, goals, or desires.

In most martial arts settings, people are looking for exactly the same things.

There are those who are looking to feed the ego, get in shape, learn something new and exciting, or experience the mystical Far East. Whatever the reasons, the people are there.

The teachers are teaching. And the personal journeys are in various stages of progression.

One of the aspects of archery that immediately appealed to me was that it is a martial art.

And like all martial arts it has several facets like a large precious gemstone. There are mental facets, moral facets, ethical facets, physical facets, and many different facets that each person brings with them. Archery by itself is like a diamond in the rough. It is just another rock like all the other rocks around it. When you pick up the bow it is like when the diamond first reaches the diamond cutter's bench. It is examined, studied, and then the work begins. As the archer progresses he adds more and more facets to the diamond. Eventually all the extraneous material is carefully removed and the beauty of the diamond will show. Diamonds are like us, they are more than they appear and no two are alike.

Or maybe, we are the diamond in the rough and the bow and arrow are the cutter's tools.

Perhaps as we progress in our personal archery journey, the bow begins to shape and polish us physically, mentally, spiritually, or whatever it is that you are searching for the bow will bring to the surface.

My martial arts experience has been a personal journey lasting more than 20 years. The reasons for my practice and dedication have changed and evolved with me as my life changes and evolves. My practice has led me down some amazing paths that I never anticipated or could foresee in the beginning.

Archery has done the same in my life. When I began serious study and practice in Olympic target shooting, I never expected to become a writer/sword swinging philosopher or even a top-level local competitor. But I have got to be honest with you; it has really been a cool ride. I have tried to be open to every path and opportunity

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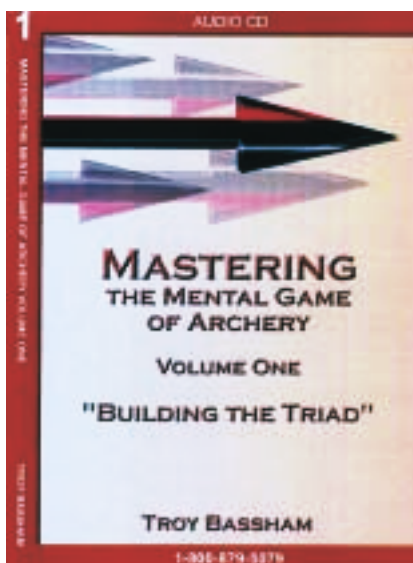
sets up the next three CDs.

He finishes with several ways for listeners to assess their own mental triads.

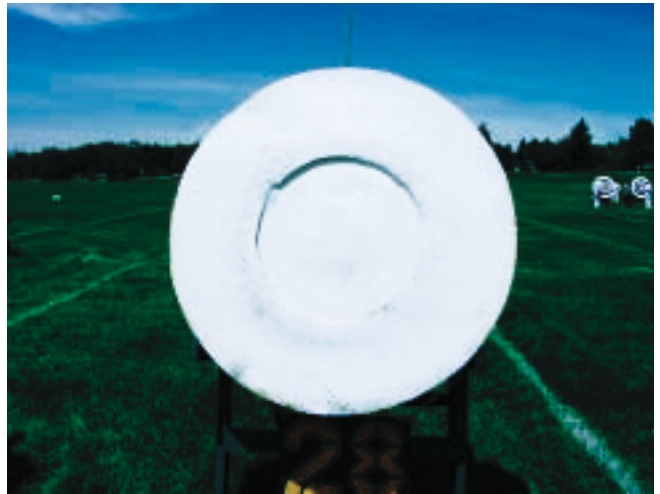
As I mentioned in the previous review, the strong points of this CD series are accessibility and affordability. The list price of US\$30 per disk is not much above typical prices for music CDs and their lengths are not too long for young archers to work through. And this is especially good for those who prefer listening to reading. (I have spent many a work commute with such CDs playing.)

As I also mentioned in the first review, Troy is not as smooth and polished as his father in delivering the message. There are a few bobbles, but none of them detract from the message. And Troy has the advantage of being closer in age to younger archers, thereby making him easier to hear than us older folks.

So, if you prefer to get your archery wisdom through your ears rather than your eyes, or are the parent of an aspiring younger archer, you now have another strong option! The response to the initial disk was strong, so Disks 1-3 are available now at [www.mentalmangement.com](http://www.mentalmangement.com) and I expect the rest of the disks will be coming out in the not too distant future.



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that I have come across. I have become friends with Olympic medalists, bow design engineers, and even a couple of icons/legends in the archery world. I have traveled and competed with the best athletes in the sport. And on a wild throw of the dice, I became a published writer.

So what is archery anyway?

Who cares?

Take archery, whatever it is, and make it yours; that is the magic of it.

*It is not that the arrow lands in the center of the target. It is how it got there that is important.*

**John Vetterli** says, "I live in Salt Lake City Utah. I have been a professional Firefighter since 1987. I am married and have a daughter and son. My martial arts history began in 1984 with Osaka Sensei in the Karate form of Wado Ryu (the way of peace or harmony). Osaka Sensei instilled in me the desire to always know why we do things not how. I began the study of Eishin Ryu Iaido (the art of the Japanese sword) in 1998 with Harris Sensei. A Zen Buddhist Priest who finally taught me how to focus. This has been a profoundly life changing experience. I am a partner in the Zen Bu Kan Dojo with my two friends Dick and Jason. We teach Iaido and Kendo."

