

Positive Mental Imagery



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*Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly
With Mental Coaching*

Dear Golf Enthusiast,

PMI is pleased to provide this free electronic newsletter, Mental Coaching for Golf to give you information for balancing your mind-body-spirit so you can play golf effortlessly, free from distractions, trusting your swing, confident, focused, and enjoying the game more!

Thanks for subscribing. With your subscription you will receive tips and insightful information at the beginning of each month to help you develop a winner's mentality for your golf game by balancing your mental, physical and spiritual bodies.

You can download the previous PMI enewsletter issues by logging on at [PMI 4](#)

January 2000: Goal Setting for Y2K
February 2000: Nutrition
March 2000: Mental Arousal Levels
April 2000: Changing Beliefs for Success
May 2000: Concentration
June 2000: Self Image & Self-Esteem
July 2000: Positive Attitude

This month's topic is about developing an inner game for putting.

Most amateur golfers spend most of their practice time with the long irons and driver. The better you become as a golfer, the more you will realize the important part that putting plays in scoring. Up to 40-50% of your score can be played out on the greens. Putting is the great equalizer in the game of golf. Since putting can be as easy as ABC, here are seven A's to increase your mental putting skills.

Ability:

Anyone can putt. A two-year-old can putt the ball into the hole. It may be the simplest task in all sport. Golfers make it the most difficult.

Anxiety:

Where do you develop fear in your putting? As you get closer to the hole? When you miss an easy putt? After you three-putt a couple of times?

Performance anxiety comes from your belief about yourself and the way you view your putting ability. First, change your thinking to believe that you can roll the ball well enough to give it a chance to go in. Second, keep your focus on each putt instead of putting pressure on yourself to play for a score. Third, don't compare your results with your playing partners. Stay focused on the things you can control. Give every putt the same importance. Don't label putts as par putts or birdie putts. Decide you can make every putt. Concentrate on the process of what you need to do to make the putt.

Attitude: When do you decide you are putting poorly? When do you decide you are putting well? Have you decided to become a good putter? Or do you constantly talk about how poorly you putt?

To become a great putter, you must have a good attitude. You must have a confident attitude that you believe in no matter what the results are. To become a great putter, you must have a positive attitude that includes being enthusiastic about wanting to putt, having your complete focus on the process of making the putt, having a specific plan, believing in your ability to carry out your plan, and being relaxed enough to putt the ball where you want it to go. Repeat these strong affirmations often to reinforce your positive attitude for putting:

I am a great putter.

I love to putt on every type of green.

I can easily accept an occasional three-putt.

I roll the ball well and give it every chance to go in.

I use the same tempo on every size putt.

I am confident no matter what the results are.

I give every size putt the same amount of time and attention.

I always aim to the high side of the hole.

"The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind."

--William James

Attentiveness:

To become a great putter, you need to practice focusing your attention on the task at hand. As you become more engrossed in the task, you will not be consciously thinking about everything else that is going on around you. Your attention can also be diverted by emotions of fear, doubt and worry due to thoughts of missing putts. Constant visualization to remind yourself of past successful putts will reduce these emotions.

The way to focus and be a consistent putter is to use a pre-shot routine to keep your mind from wandering and thinking of extraneous things. Immersing yourself in your routine keeps your mind in the present, focused on the task of rolling the ball into the hole. Using the same routine every time builds a rhythm, which carries over into your putting stroke. You can then putt more solidly and confidently. Your pre-shot routine should include:

FORMULATE YOUR PLAN:

- Assess the speed, slope and undulations of the green.
- Select a specific target.
- Program your mental image.
- Rehearse your putt (mentally and physically)

OVER THE BALL:

- Trust your decision.
- Aim and align to your target.
- Deep breathe to relax your mind and body.
- Take one last look to connect with the target.
- Trust your stroke to your senses.
- Focus your eyes on a spot.
- Trust your stroke.

Awareness:

Trying too hard for results produces tension, tightening and loss of touch or feel. It is important to access your feel by using your senses. Instead of trying to get the ball into the hole, use your inner awareness to see where the hole is, and feel where the ball goes in relation to the hole. You can practice this by putting with your eyes closed. Another way to develop awareness is to determine without looking up where the ball will end up, right or left, long or short. This requires an awareness of the feel of the swing, a feel for the length and direction.

Art of Putting:

Putting is a game within a game. It is the part of the game where the ball never leaves the ground. It is artful because it requires that you create the path the ball

will travel in your mind and then stroke it along that line with an artful stroke of gentleness or firmness depending on the conditions. It is the stroke where you need to trust your inner intuition and creativeness completely.

Automatic Putting:

Practice your stroke until you have a repeatable, reliable stroke. You will know that it is reliable when you can hit the ball solidly with your eyes closed. Then you can trust your stroke under pressure in a match. Trust is the most important element in the putting game. A consistent pre-shot routine will put you in position to focus on the hole, see the line and stroke the ball to the target by feeling the ball move to the hole. Enjoy the sound of the ball bouncing off the bottom of the cup!

"It's a funny thing, life. If you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it."

--W. Somerset Maugham

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