

# Newsletter December 2001

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

**INTENTION**, by Joan A. King, C.Ht.

Happy Holidays! There is a new spirit around this holiday season. It is the spirit of good will towards men and women. Everywhere there are lights bringing a new warm spirit around us uplifting our energy. Songs are being played reminiscent of past warm memories, opening up our hearts. Now is the time to begin programming that same lightness and joy into your golf game, playing from your heart instead of your head. In the words of Seve Ballesteros: "I don't know how it starts, (playing well) but I know where--in the mind. The mind controls the heart. The heart controls the body."

In most parts of the country, golfers have now turned to other interests including the holiday celebrations. Regardless of whether you are playing golf now, or not, the end of the year is a good time to reflect back on what you did well during the past year and decide how you can improve for the upcoming year. A good place to start the New Year is with a mental training program to improve your life and your golf game.

*Tiger has accomplished what he has because he has beliefs in his head that other people don't.*

Tiger Woods seems to have an aura of calm and composure on the golf course only interrupted by his fist-pumping enjoyment of success, and momentary bouts of unexpected disappointment. Overall he seems to be immune to the pressure and anxiety and other forms of interference on the golf course. He attributes much of his mental strength to his Thai heritage and Buddhism. His mother taught him the Buddhist philosophy of letting life happen, rather than the Western way of trying to make it happen.

Tiger's father taught his son what he had learned from his psychological training as a Green Beret. He taught him how to take the conscious mind out of the performance of a task and move into the subconscious mind. Tiger said, "I have learned to trust the subconscious, and my instincts have never lied to me." When you are playing at your peak levels, you are also trusting your game to your subconscious mind and allowing your swing to happen automatically.

Decide to be the grandest version of yourself that you can imagine. Be committed to giving 100% and using as much of your greatness as you can muster in any given moment. The difference between winners and losers is their desire to be the best. Don't give up on your dreams. When pros finish second, they don't give excuses. They ask themselves, "What do I need to do to take my game to the next level so I can win?"

Annika Sorenstam is in that position today. At the top, like Tiger, she is an inspiration to all golfers by working even harder mentally and physically, on her game and herself. Annika came in second at the November season-ending LPGA Tyco/ADT Championship, but she walked away feeling like a winner. She finished on Sunday with an eagle-par-birdie-par 65 to set a record for the lowest scoring average in a tournament (69.42) in LPGA history. She had ended a sensational tournament run by winning eight times, including a major, and was the first woman to shoot 59 in a tournament.

Karie Webb, who won the Tyco/ADT tournament, also had a fantastic year. She became the youngest woman in history to complete the career Grand Slam. As she began her "off-season", Annika was already moving forward in her thinking. "That's her (Karie's) answer to my season. I think it means I've got to be ready next year."

*Annika Sorenstam has accomplished what she has because she has some beliefs in her head that other people don't.*

What is your belief and intention for your golf game?

We are responsible for creating our lives. Now is the time to use your "off-season" time to mentally program your golf game. Now is the time to use your free will to make the choices that will produce the results you desire. Results aren't always in line with our expectations due to thinking about one thing but intending another. If you intend to hit the ball straight down the middle and you are thinking about the fairway bunker or lateral water hazard on the right, the result will be hitting the ball to the bunker or the water hazard.

The principle of intention shows us that the results aren't the problem. Become aware of your intention and you create a different outcome. This means doing only those things that come from the truth of who you are. Whatever your situation is right now, you have played a major role in setting it up. It is you who have created your circumstances. With every experience you alone are painting your own canvas, thought by thought, choice by choice. And beneath each of those thoughts and choices lies your deepest intention.

What is your real intention?

Annika grew up believing that she could shoot 54. Her intention is to do just that. Tiger's intention is to better all of Jack Nicklaus' records.

Your intention and desire can create a better life and a better golf game. And when you don't examine your intention, you often end up with consequences that block your progress. If you change your intentions, you create different consequences. When you make choices that honor who you are and you begin believing in the greatest version of yourself, you'll get exactly what your Creator intended for you—the chance to reach your greatest potential.

When you were learning the mechanics of the golf swing, motor skill by motor skill, you had to think about how to do it. Now is the time to move from the analytical, thinking process into the swing that is more of a reflex action. The more you practice it in your mind using your senses of feeling, seeing and trusting, the more automatic it will be. This is the way you learned to drive a car. After you had learned to drive the car, you no longer thought about your foot on the gas and break pedals, or your hands on the steering wheel. You were then only concerned with reacting to the road.

*Roger Bannister was the first person to break the four-minute mile because he had a belief in his head that other runner's didn't.*

Roger Bannister was in Medical School at Cambridge when he ran the first sub-four-minute mile. And no one believed it could be done. At Cambridge there were several research papers published that said the mile could not be run in less than four minutes. Roger read those research papers and thought about the great milers who couldn't do it. However, Roger's intention was to break the record. He believed that he could do it. He saw himself doing it over and over again in his mind. By the time he broke the record, he had already practiced hundreds and hundreds of times in his mind.

Like Annika, Tiger and Roger you can improve your performance by practicing in your mind away from the golf course. Set aside ten to fifteen minutes a few times every week to practice your golf swing, your pre-shot routine and your golf game in your mind. You can do this easily by repeatedly listening to PMI self-hypnosis tapes or CD's in the privacy of your own home. ([www.mastermindgolf.com](http://www.mastermindgolf.com)) Inside your mind is the only place you can practice perfectly. Program your mind with your best intention of what you want to believe about your golf game. Train your brain so you can swing the same on the practice tee as on the golf course.

1. Begin now to **stop** giving yourself verbal instructions about how to swing the golf club. Practice seeing, feeling and hearing your golf swing in your mind's eye. Hear the solid contact of the club striking the ball. Hear the dynamic sound the shaft makes as it moves through the air. Listen to the rhythm of the entire swing. Feel the easy, fluid tempo of the club moving through the entire arc. Feel your body and club moving in harmonious synchronization.

2. Swing the club indoors or out without a ball, feeling and sensing the rhythm, tempo and feel of the swing while looking in a mirror. Give yourself one swing key to anchor your good swing. Close your eyes and swing the club noticing the feel of your body, your balance, and the movement of the club.
3. Also, practice your pre-shot routine in your mind until it becomes an imprint in your unconscious mind. Then physically practice it indoors until you can repeat it without thinking. Having a repeatable preshot routine that you don't have to think about will give you the consistency you desire.

***"What's the longest walk in golf? It's from the practice tee to the first tee.  
I don't care if it's 10 yards. It's the longest walk in golf.  
Winners take their swing with them. Losers don't."*** - Moe Norman

### ***Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!***

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***"After taking your workshop I won my last two tournaments, and was runner-up in the third. My attitude has changed from choking to positive and I am able to keep my focus under the most stressful situations. Listening to your "Performance Anxiety" tape reinforces my new positive attitude."*** Rebecca Strong

***"My golf game has improved tremendously and I now consistently shoot in the 70's. Thank you for the wonderful tapes."*** Jack Broad

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<http://www.mastermindgolf.com>***

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If you have a question or need help with your mental game, email Joan at Positive Mental Imagery, [info@mastermindgolf.com](mailto:info@mastermindgolf.com) Also, please share with us how this website information has helped you improve your performance.