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Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly
With Mental Coaching

Consistent Golf, by Joan A. King

Almost all golfers want their golf games to be more *consistent*. According to the dictionary, being consistent means to do the same thing over and over; unchanging. I believe the dream of all golfers is to hit every shot well and score repeatedly within a certain range of scores. However, when a golfer has achieved this consistency, I believe he/she will then not be satisfied, and will want to improve to a higher level of performance.

If there was one thing I have learned during my years as a professional, it is that the only constant thing about golf is its inconstancy. When I turned professional, suddenly I had all the time and opportunity I needed. No matter how much work I did, one week I would have it and the next I couldn't hit my hat.
---Jack Nicklaus

In the Stockholm airport there is a statue of a horse with a sign that reads, "In Kafkas story a person awakes one morning to find that he has turned into a beetle. Who are you today?"

I have heard golfers lament when they are playing poorly, "I don't know who showed up today..... someone else (other than my best golfer-self) is in my body." Who do you bring to the golf course to play? Your inner trust of yourself must be constant to play consistent golf.

No one plays golf with the consistency of a machine, hitting every shot the same way. Our bodies change from day to day. Physical training of our bodies alone will not give us the consistency we are looking for. What we are seeking is a game where we won't be embarrassed, humiliated or overwhelmed by other emotions that break down our trust in our ability. Do you have a fear of looking bad? The more you do, the worse you will play. Therefore, let go of the fear and enjoy the game. Trying to control our emotions with consistency is also not possible and probably not healthy.

The way to become consistent is through commitment to your goals and having the discipline to attain them. *Discipline is remembering what you want.* If you have the desire to accomplish something, discipline comes easily.

“I put in many, many hours of exercises—like rocking sideways on my ankles—designed to teach me to stay on the inside of my right foot going back and the inside of my left coming down..... I must have played golf for three or four years before Jack Grout permitted me to raise my heels at all, (but) the dividends I’ve since reaped make me eternally grateful to him for verbally whipping me into performing what was then a very boring regimen.”
---Jack Nicklaus

John Daly waited six long years to develop the belief in himself that he had lost. His victory September 2, 2001 at the BMW International Open was a triumph in desire, discipline, and dedication. In the last six years, he had played in 151 PGA Tour events without winning. His last win was his second major championship, the 1995 British Open. In 1999 he had made the decision that he wanted to keep playing golf. He dedicated himself to that decision and began to practice, and focus more on his goals.

Most golfers are committed to practicing drills and learning skills to improve their golf swings. However, most golfers are not as committed to practicing the mental skills necessary to improve their golf games. The key to performing in the Zone State is to practice mentally and physically until the skill becomes habitual and requires no conscious thought. Mental keys for constancy are:

1. The first ingredient in constancy is perfect practice. The best place to practice perfectly is in your imagination. See yourself over and over again, swinging with your perfect swing, playing the game perfectly. Then go to the practice range and hit the shots as you saw them in your “mind’s eye”. To produce more consistent shots practice your swing, and *also* practice making your mental preparation more consistent.

2. The second ingredient for constancy is the pre-shot routine. Would you want to fly with a pilot who didn’t check out all of his instruments before he started down the runway? Of course you wouldn’t. In the same way it is important that you have a pre-flight checklist to prepare your mind. This checklist prepares you to let go of conscious thoughts and to put your swing into a smooth flight pattern.

Your pre-shot routine is the map that gives direction to your brain about the shot you are going to hit. *“What you think, you create”*. For your swing to be the same, your routine prior to swinging must be the same every time. Successful golfers train their minds to do the same routine in sequence over and over until it becomes a habit. On the golf course they can then activate the sequence by a trigger or swing key to start the process.

Write down each step in your routine. Take the list to the practice range and practice the step-by-step routine until it becomes habitual and you don’t have to think about it anymore. The routine will get you focused and eliminate all inner

and outer distractions. It will set your mind into the same mental patterns every time to program you for consistent results.

3. The third ingredient for constancy is your rhythm and tempo. Maintaining a relaxed state of mind and body will help you access your natural rhythm and tempo. The easiest way to access this relaxed state is by breathing deeply, by enjoying playing golf, and remembering how easy it is when you play well.

Trying harder is not always trying better.

***Good things come to people who let them happen
and stop trying to force them.***

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!

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“Your “Progressive Relaxation of the Mind and Body” tape continues to be most helpful in preparing me mentally for my important rounds. It also is helpful in reducing everyday tensions.” ---Jake Scott

Listening to the “Release for Performance Anxiety” tape is extremely helpful in reducing stress and helping me to relax --- something that has always been difficult for me. As a result my handicap has gone down from 10 to 8.” ---Jean Mylea

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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 Also, please share with us how this website information has helped you improve your performance.

