

POSITIVE MENTAL IMAGERY

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*Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly*

WHO ARE YOU?

by Joan King

When I was in Sweden I noticed a sign in the Stockholm airport that posed the question, "Who are you today?" You have probably heard golfers say, "I never know who is going to show up today" meaning the person swinging their club is not the one they expected.

Who are you? What kind of a golfer are you? Most people like to think of themselves as who they would like to be, not who they really are. The foundation of personal success lies in understanding yourself. Your personality will always be revealed on the golf course. Your playing partners know by your behavior what kind of a person you are.

Since the weather around most of the country has been too cold and snowy for golf, I thought this would be a good chance for you to start off the New Year by finding out how you can improve your golf game by discovering what your behavior patterns are. The more you understand your own behavior patterns, the more you can adapt to the different situations that come up on the golf course. The less you understand, the fewer options you have.

As humans, everyone can be included in four basic types of behavioral tendencies. Everyone has some of each of the four basic styles but you probably have more of one type than the others. And when you understand your personality you can then consider the strengths and weaknesses specific to your style and relate your behavior to your golf game. Under pressure your strengths can become your weaknesses because you will use the behavior that makes you feel comfortable.

The Driver: The "grip it and rip it" player will have an advantage on wide open, long courses and not so great an advantage on tight, placement courses.

The Socializer: The social golfer feels very comfortable in a sociable foursome, but less comfortable in a tournament where there is no sociability.

The Craftsman: A player who is steady, "on the fairway, on the green, two putts" plans and executes well, but is less comfortable in situations s/he hasn't encountered before.

The Analyzer: The cautious player carefully plans out his game and plays conservatively and makes few mistakes, but has a tendency not to take risks and stretch his limits.

There is no best style. This is the way you have adapted to your environment and live your life. Each personality style has its positive and negative aspects. What is important, is to know yourself so you can avoid your negative side when under stressful situations and be able to use the best aspect of your personality.

Our lives would be so much easier if everyone was like us and there was no conflict. Since this is not a truism, understanding how people operate their lives differently from the way you do will help you to be more tolerant of their behavior. Your behavior will be influenced by others and by the situation you are in. The best attitude is to *enjoy* the similarities and *accept* the differences. If you don't do this, you will sabotage your peace of mind and your golf game.

For the next four months I will give you the profile for each of the four personality and behavior styles. This month we are going to look at the first one which is "The Driver".

Characteristics:

The "Driver" golfer hits the ball hard and harder. They hit the ball as far as they can. The tougher the course and the further back the tees are, the more they like it. They take a minimum amount of time planning and executing a shot and approach the game impatiently. This player is mainly concerned with accomplishing the most s/he can in the shortest amount of time. They have less concern for *how* they hit the ball. They are more concerned with getting the ball in the hole. As goal oriented players, they will often try any shot that might work. They play fast and have a desire for immediate results. These are the "grip it and rip it" people.

Tendencies of the "Driver":

- Controlling, dominating, direct, and daring.
- Love *action* and are generally in a hurry to make decisions.
- Love competition, and plays in order to win.
- Determined and prefer to get where they are going in their own way.
- Solves problems and makes decisions decisively and quickly.
- Will always be doing something, even if it is wrong.
- "It's not how, it's how many".

"Driver" Professionals:

- Greg Norman
- Arnold Palmer
- John Daly
- Tiger Woods
- Laura Davies
- Jean Van de Velde

"Driver" Strengths:

- The potential to shoot very low scores when you are playing well.
- Hitting the ball long leaves short iron shots into the greens.

- This behavior intimidates opponents.

“Driver” Weaknesses:

- Going-for-broke can result in very high scores.
- Not taking the time to plan and execute produces poor decisions and mistakes.
- Frustrated by slow play

How to Improve:

The “Driver” golfer loves anything that involves *action*. They have an attacking, carefree spirit. In learning the golf swing or a swing change, the tendency is to finish learning the skill quickly and move to the next level. S/he needs to learn each skill fully before moving on to the next one. When in trouble on the golf course, s/he needs to take the time to weigh all the possible solutions and determine the highest percentage shot. The tendency is to quickly hit out of trouble without any thought of the consequences. When you practice, work on developing your short game to eliminate the need for aggressiveness.

Mantra they need to adopt: HASTE MAKES WASTE!

The “Driver” personality is usually a visual learner. To learn easily they need to see how to hit a shot or do a drill, and to see themselves doing it. Video tapes are excellent learning tools for this player. Since this person is always in a hurry, s/he is the one you will see standing in the middle of the fairway, hands on hips, impatiently waiting for his/her turn.

In a stressful golf situation, the “Driver” needs to:

- slow down by breathing deeply; move slower, walk slower.
- take more time to make decisions.
- pay attention to details.
- take time to see the shot you are about to hit.
- slow down the swing as the tendency is to overswing and power through obstacles, which causes you to “come over” or “come off” the ball.
- use a consistent pre-shot routine.
- learn that you can make birdie on a par 5 by laying up.

No human quality is good or bad except as it is used. Used properly it indicates a strength of character, improperly used it causes problems.

The Optimist Creed: *Think only of the best, work only for the best, and expect only the best. Wear a cheerful countenance at all times, and greet every living creature you meet with a smile.*

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!

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