

# POSITIVE MENTAL IMAGERY

*Newsletter August 2004*

*Vol. VI, Edition 8*

*Improve Your Golf Game  
Easily & Quickly*

## **TOURNAMENT PREPARATION**

By Joan King

The summer is almost over in many parts of the country. This is the time of year club, city, and state tournaments are being held to close the season. If you have been practicing, playing, doing flexibility & weight training and aerobic endurance, now is the time to give yourself a final mental tune-up to play in a championship tournament.

Two years ago a poll taken of expert golfers revealed that they thought half to 80% of the game is mental. They said they spent less than 10 percent of their practice time on their mental skills. If you spend time every day working on the following you will have a definite advantage over the competition.

### **ETIQUETTE& RULES**

Review the USGA Rules of Golf to know your options are if you get into trouble. Under the pressure of having made a mistake that costs them a stroke or two, I see golfers making poor choices about dropping the ball for their next stroke. A member of the authorized Rules Committee isn't always immediately available to help you with your decision. If you don't know the rules you will have to ask a playing partner, who may think h/she knows the rules but could misinterpret them.

In stroke play, if you aren't sure of the correct procedure, you have the option of completing the hole by playing two balls. But you **MUST** declare to your marker which ball you want to count for your score if the Rules permit you to count that ball for your score. In match play if you and your opponent disagree on the score, it must be resolved, or you must tell your opponent before you leave the green that you want a ruling when an official is available.

Always carry The Rules of Golf book in your bag so you can look up the relevant information and choose the option most favorable to your situation.

### MENTAL REHEARSAL

Train your mind to stay in the present by mentally rehearsing (see January 2002 PMI article) every shot you will hit. See or imagine yourself playing at your own peak level of performance. Rehearse what you want to happen. Scientists have found that this can also improve your swing because your mind is actually programming your muscles as you visualize yourself hitting the perfect shots. The best time to do this is when you are falling asleep at night, while you are half-awake.

See and feel yourself relaxed, confident and in control. By training your mind to stay in the present you will be able to focus and concentrate easily to make all the necessary decisions automatically and confidently.

Program your mind for what you want. Feel the good feelings of playing well. You become confident by affirming yourself and your play. See yourself winning.

### AFFIRMATIONS

Peak performance = your potential – interference. Notice any negative thoughts/doubts that come up as you approach the tournament date. Write down the negative self-talk on one side of a piece of paper. On the other side, write down the opposite positive thought several times. Write and repeat verbally the positive affirmation (see August 2002 PMI article) during the day and see yourself executing it easily and effortlessly.

For example, if you have the thought that your opponent is a better player than you, bring your focus back to what you can control.... You. Tell yourself that you are going to play your own game and let the chips fall where they may.

Listen to a positive reinforcement tape every day such as the PMI *"Release from Performance Anxiety," "Self-Hypnosis for Playing in the Zone," "Concentration for Consistent Golf,"* or *"Confident Putting for Lower Scores."* All PMI audiotapes are on sale ([www.pmi4.com/cart](http://www.pmi4.com/cart)) at half-price during the month of August.

### SHORT GAME

Spend time every day on the scoring part of your game. The short game is especially important in match play because you can put a lot of pressure on your opponent if s/he thinks you will always get it close. In these practice sessions, focus on hitting to a target, sensing your feel and trusting your mechanics. Putt (see PMI August 2000 article) 10-15 minutes, indoors or out, to develop an automatic feel.

### WEATHER CONDITIONS

Tournaments are held in all kinds of weather, except lightening so you need to be prepared mentally for any change during the round.

### RAIN:

- Have a good rain suit in your bag. I have seen golfers quit in the middle of a round because they were so cold and wet. Have a large umbrella. A plastic rain shield for the golf cart also helps to keep you dry.
- Keep your golf gloves in a plastic bag. Wear waterproof shoes.
- Put extra towels in your bag.
- If you have a rain delay do not overeat or drink caffeine drinks.
- When it is raining the ball will fly shorter distances in the air and will not roll as far.
- Wet grass on the greens is slower and the break will be reduced.

### WIND

- To avoid losing your balance, widen your stance.
- Move the ball back in your stance to keep the ball lower.
- The wind will distort your auditory sense and the tendency is to swing harder. Focus on maintaining an even tempo. *When it is breezy, swing easy.*
- Pay attention to crosswinds as they will make a ball with sidespin travel further offline both in the air and on the ground.

### DAY BEFORE THE TOURNAMENT

- Play a practice round to chart the course, not to keep score.
- Develop a game plan (see October 2002 article) for the first day.
- Spend enough time on the chipping and putting greens to get the feel for distance.
- Eat a healthy dinner (no sweets, caffeine, alcohol).
- Get a good night's sleep. Listen to a relaxation tape ("*Relaxation of the Mind and Body*") can be ordered at [www.pmi4.com/cart](http://www.pmi4.com/cart).
- Prepare equipment. Mark balls.
- Relax by clearing all mind of problems.
- Mentally rehearse playing first round.

### DAY OF TOURNAMENT

- Get out of bed two hours before your tee time. Do stretching exercises.
- Eat a healthy breakfast of protein and complex carbohydrates. Put nuts, an apple, or low carb bar in your golf bag. To keep your blood sugar stable, munch on the food instead of eating it all at once.

- Begin to focus your mind and relax your body. Envision your round, relaxed and in control.
- Get to the golf course at least one hour before your tee time so you will have plenty of time to prepare.
- Hit pitch shots to the practice green to find your tempo and focus on targets.
- Warm up your full swing. Be aware of any consistent pattern in your ball flight and plan to play it. Don't try to fix it. This will cause anxiety.
- Spend 10-15 minutes on the putting green alternating short and long putts. Finish with 4-foot putts with the flagstick removed.
- Go to the first tee relaxed, prepared and centered on your plan. Believe in your potential. TRUST (see PMI article October 2000) your training and inner guidance on every shot. Have fun by enjoying the opportunity to see how low you can score!

***"Just as your car runs more smoothly and requires less energy to go faster and farther when the wheels are in perfect alignment, you perform better when your thoughts, feelings, emotions, goals, and values are in balance."***  
**-- Brian Tracy**

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

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*"Listening to your CDs kept me calm and focused during our club championship. It has helped with subsequent golf games and has strengthened my ability to trust my swing and maintain course management. Repeated listening also helps me to stay focused on the moment." --A.H.M., Amateur Golfer*

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One on One: Call 561-747-7276 or contact Joan today to ask about personal coaching by phone. Learn what is missing in *your* game to achieve your peak performances.

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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.