

POSITIVE MENTAL IMAGERY

Newsletter November 2004

Vol. V, Edition 11

*Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly*



PERFECTIONISM

By Joan King

Once again we have come to the end of another summer golf season. Here in Florida we are starting the winter tournament golf season while those of you up north are turning your attention to other activities. In five months Spring will once again tempt you back to the golf course. The off-season is the best time to prepare your mind and body for that return. (see PMI Newsletter November 2002)

As we enter into the Holiday Season, there will be many opportunities to become stressed causing tension in our bodies. Stress is mostly caused by the way we perceive situations. The way we perceive what happens to us is a major factor in success. In striving to achieve perfection in our golf game or in our lives, we often create stress. The holidays, as well as the golf course, are a good opportunity to look at your perfectionism and determine if it is helping or interfering with your performance or your lifestyle.

Besty King, LPGA states, *"My self-esteem isn't dependent upon my golf game."*

To connect self-worth (a good opinion of yourself) with success equals unhappiness and dissatisfaction with life.

You are not your golf game....your golf game brings you an awareness of who you are.

Do you see yourself as a person, and yourself as a golfer, as the same or different? Perfectionism says: *I'm not good enough, I don't know enough, I don't do enough, I don't win enough.*

Do you remember your mistakes longer than your successes? Perfectionism says: *It's not all right to make mistakes.* Perfectionists criticize themselves because they have the wrong attitude. World class golfers not only enjoy their great shots but don't get wrapped up in missed shots. The secret for success is believing in yourself!

Do you judge your shots against ones you hit perfectly in the past? Perfectionists measure their self worth totally on their performance. Golf is a game where mistakes and imperfections are built in. In this kind of a game, if you only like yourself on the days when you play well, you are going to have problems.

Do you criticize yourself more than you praise yourself? Perfectionists are always unhappy with not being able to perform to their perfect expectations. In our society it hasn't been socially acceptable to brag about yourself, so golfers go to the other extreme and make self-deprecating remarks.

In our society we are constantly praised for what we do well, for our perfection. This is a wonderful personality trait, but there are times when we cross the line and it controls us. Depending upon your level of ability your perfectionism changes. When you were first learning how to swing the golf club it was a wonderful motivating factor. But there is a point that is reached where you need to accept that you have already learned what is necessary and trust that you can perform to your highest ability without pushing any further.

Ben Hogan has been considered by many to have been a perfectionist and to have had the "perfect swing." In 1956 he came to this realization;

"My attitude suddenly changed from being a self doubter and uncertain of myself in a positive direction. I honestly began to feel that I could count on playing fairly well each time I went out. That there was no practical reason for me to feel I might suddenly 'lose it all'. I guess what lay behind my new confidence was this; I had stopped trying to do a great many difficult things perfectly, because it had become clear in my mind that this ambitious, over thoroughness, my perfectionism was neither possible nor advisable or even necessary. All you needed to groove were the fundamental movements and there weren't so many of them. I don't know what came first the chicken or the egg, but at about the same time I began to feel that I had the stuff to play credible golf even when I was not at my best. My shot making started to take on a new and more stable consistency."

People who are successful in business get there by making things happen and tend to use this same theory on the golf course. However, in golf we need to let go, trust and let things happen, rather than forcing the results. Perfectionists tend to worry about things they can't control and also suffer from "*paralysis by analysis*" trying to perfect the swing. To move to the next level you have to let go of the things you can't control and just let the game happen.

In every round where a golfer shoots in the 60's (better than perfect), they can always find places where they could have improved and shot a lower score. In golf you have to accept that you don't have to hit the ball perfectly every time to play well. The game of golf, like life, is about accepting and learning from your mistakes. When you are accepting and trusting you can then keep your composure and concentrate on getting the ball in the hole.

Signs of perfectionism:

- Procrastination
- You don't enjoy what you are doing, and aren't happy until it's over
- All-or-nothing; you make a double bogie and the tournament is over
- Dwelling on the negative
- Fearing criticism and reacting defensively
- "I hope I can....."
- "I am how I perform."
- A childhood where parents gave inconsistent, conditional or no approval
- Trying harder to win approval and love of parents

Ways to change perfectionism to acceptance of self:

- Identify negative thoughts
- Substitute more realistic and positive thoughts
- List advantages and disadvantages of thinking in a perfectionist way
- Refuse to give in to a perfectionist habit
- Accept failure as a learning exercise
- Increase your self confidence by affirming yourself
- Program yourself to achieve specific goals

To Control your golf game:

- ✓ Reevaluate your purpose for playing.
- ✓ Set reasonable goals based on your talents.
- ✓ Set a realistic goal on how much time to practice.
- ✓ Set goals before the round, and don't increase them during the round.
- ✓ Forgive yourself when you constantly make mistakes.
- ✓ Set goals for increasing mental skills
- ✓ Stay in the NOW and concentrate 100% on each shot
- ✓ Be patient and NEVER give up!

Golf is a game. Children play games. You took up the game because it was fun and you enjoyed playing it like a child. Perfectionists forget the fun and put all their energy, commitment, dedication, hard work into striving to get better. They have forgotten why they took the game up in the first place.

When you let go of the worry, judgment and thoughts you have about yourself, and your performance, golf becomes fun and you are “in the zone.”

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!

© Copyright PMI 2004. All Rights Reserved.

ORDER NOW! GREAT STOCKING STUFFERS FOR THE GOLFERS ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST! PMI self-hypnosis CDs & tapes to improve the mental parts of your golf game in the privacy of your own home. Order today at www.pmi4.com/cart

Testimonials:

“I listen to your CDs daily and have lowered my handicap 5 strokes. Very few negative thoughts enter my head now. When they do, I can quickly dismiss them and replace them with positive thoughts. I accept the bad shots with the same temperament as I do the good shots. Other people’s comments have no effect on me anymore. My concentration has improved and I am more laying more confidently.” --Kim Edwards, Recreational Golfer

“Your Concentration CD has help me to slow down, let go of distractions, and concentrate better. I am having much better results, especially with difficult shots. I am trusting my swing more and make more putts now. My handicap has gone down 5 strokes. Thank you.” --James Mondello, Amateur Golfer

ORDER NOW! GREAT STOCKING STUFFERS FOR THE GOLFERS ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST! PMI self-hypnosis CDs & tapes to improve the mental parts of your golf game in the privacy of your own home. Order today at www.pmi4.com/cart

One on One: For a FREE consultation, call Joan today by phone (561-747-7276) or email info@mastermindgolf.com. Learn what is missing in your game to achieve your peak performances.

If this monthly ezine has been helpful to you, please forward it to your friends so they can have more fun playing the game of golf while lowering their scores. Download previous PMI newsletter issues by logging on at www.mastermindgolf.com

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.