

POSITIVE MENTAL IMAGERY

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*Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly*



AWARENESS

by Joan King

It has been my plan to give you insightful information in these newsletters to help you develop a golf game where you can play effortlessly, trust your swing, become confident, focused and enjoy the game more.

Golf is a metaphor for life because it has the same perpetual challenge of not being able to achieve perfection. Life and golf are natural processes of ebbs and flows, ups and downs. Golf presents challenges for us to learn and grow. Everything that happens, that has happened, is happening, and will happen in the future is the outward manifestation of your innermost thoughts, choices, ideas and determinations.

This month's ezine will cover diverse thoughts to jog your memory. Without awareness there can be no change. Awareness is the key to all change. Use your imagination and intuition to put these thoughts into action.

Play the Game of Golf (November 2000)

The game of golf is about getting the ball from the tee into the hole in the least number of strokes. Along the way golfers let many thoughts interfere with the fun of accomplishing that task. If you hit the ball well on the range and have trouble executing on the course, perhaps you are trying too hard to hit every shot “perfectly.” Instead of thinking about how to fix your swing, use your (see, hear, feel) senses to access the swing that you know has worked in the past. Abandon fixing your swing on the course, relax and FEEL your tempo. Playing the game means moving out of the learning/practicing mode into the trusting mode. Concentrate on getting the ball in the hole and you will then be “playing the game.”

Control Yourself and Your Game (September 2003)

Most golfers try to control their golf swings and wind up out of control. To gain control and play at your peak performance level you have to let go of conscious thinking and allow your unconscious mind to perform as you have instructed it. To move “into the zone”; trust your swing, breathe deeply through your diaphragm to relax and focus on preparing for the present shot. The only thing you can control is you. Clear your mind of all extraneous thoughts and focus on the joy of feeling the rhythm of your swing.

Maintain Your Constant Arousal Level (March 2000)

The average golfer leads a hectic life during the week and is unaware that s/he brings this stress to the golf course on the weekend. Many people use sports to release this tension through physical exertion. Unlike football, tennis, swimming, weightlifting or running, golf is not a high arousal/excitement sport. When you are over-aroused, you lose the skills you have practiced, your balance, timing and tempo are off, and you revert to power and aggression to force the shot. Know that unless you are diligent about maintaining an even composure, your swing will speed up during the round. Breathe deeply to relax and focus, stay in the present, let go of expectations, maintain positive self-talk and stick with your game plan.

Keep a Positive Attitude (July 2000)

The bad news is that no one can be positive 100% of the time. Perhaps that is one reason why golf scores are inconsistent. The good news is that you can change your attitude, just as any bad habit can be changed. You choose your attitude and state of mind. The sooner you decide to think positively about yourself and your golf game, the less anxiety you will have and the more you will enjoy your rounds of golf. Don't waste your round looking at “half empty” glasses and making a victim of yourself. Make it your most enjoyable experience possible.

After the third round of the LPGA World Championship this past weekend, Annika Sorenstam was asked by the media how she dealt with her playing

partner Christie Kerr starting off with five birdies while she was struggling. Her answer was that she loves birdies, loves to see people make birdies, and it encourages her to make birdies. Winners maintain a positive attitude about themselves and their surroundings.

Be Aware of Your Thoughts (May 2002)

The human mind is only capable of focusing on one thought at a time. This is called the Dominant Response. This means that the most current thought on your mind before you swing the club will dictate your performance of that shot. If you are thinking “failure” you will get “failure” feedback in the form of a missed shot. Don’t let your mind wander into the future “what if” scenarios, or into remembering past missed shots. Instead, act as if you have confidence. Act as if you are successful. Act as if you love everything about the game of golf. Program your self-talk “towards” what you want instead of “away from” what you don’t want. Focus your dominant thought on what you DO want.

Maintain Your Rhythmical Tempo

The golf swing is a complicated maneuver using many different muscle groups, at times moving in opposing directions. This complex movement cannot be controlled by conscious thought. Swings of world-class golfers look effortless and rhythmical. This can only be accomplished by trusting the subconscious mind to swing the golf club automatically. Avoid the tendency to “hit at” the ball. Picture or feel the entire swing moving through to the finish position. Hum a favorite song. Picture a metronome swinging back and forth consistently. Count to yourself as you swing 1 (back) and (pause at top of swing) 2 (downswing), 3 (finish).

Use a Consistent Pre-Shot Routine (August 2003)

A mental and physical routine is used in every sport to prepare the athlete for his/her performance. It keeps the athlete engrossed in the moment, and his/her thoughts away from the pressure of the results. It is a map that gives direction to your brain about what you want to do. It is a signal to the unconscious mind to get ready to perform. A golf shot will hold your attention if you lead up to it with a consistent pre-shot routine.

The pre-shot routine is a strategy to activate your swing. Consistency in your swing is accomplished by focusing on the strategy that will get you ready. When you are focused on your routine, your mind is too busy to listen to negative thoughts. The pre-shot routine has its own rhythm. Each part is completed with your full attention before moving on to the next step. If you vary your routine from shot to shot you can expect inconsistent results. A consistent routine will produce consistent results. Watch the pros on TV prepare to hit a shot and you will see that their routines never vary.

Be Decisive

Indecision is the enemy of golfers. Any indecision will cause your brain to be confused and it won't know what message to send to your muscles. Be absolutely certain about which club to use. Be absolutely certain about the shot you are going to hit with that shot. Prepare your mind by visualizing, imagining and feeling the trajectory of the shot. Trust that this information is being relayed to your muscles. Play every shot with your full intention and attention as if it is the only shot you will hit that day.

Manage the Golf Course Well (October 2002)

Course management is the ability to play around the golf course the way it was designed by the architect, avoiding the trouble and placing each shot in the best position to hit the next shot. Your course management depends upon many things including your skill level, your personality, course conditions and the pressure of the situation. Have a strategy for playing each hole so you will be prepared to focus in on your targets. Plan your strategy according to your ability. Decide which holes you can par and which you can bogie, etc. and set your own par on each hole. You can be a genius at course management if you are confident with your wedges and putter. Then it won't matter if you miss greens.

Finish Strong

Most tournaments are won or lost on the closing holes. As you approach hole 15, use your mental energy to focus on finishing strong. This is when you may be physically or mentally tired, especially if you have been grinding it out all day. Play one shot at a time, taking the time to carefully plan and execute the shot. This is not the time to try and pull off a low percentage shot. Base your shot selection on your skill level. Only hit shots that you are confident of executing. Keep your focus on yourself, not on what others may be doing.

If you are a typical golfer, you frequently take lessons so you will know what to practice. You spend time physically practicing your golf swing. You stretch and exercise your muscles for strength and flexibility. How much time do you spend practicing your mental skills? Consider practicing being in a confident, joyful mental state where you can produce peak results in your life and in your golf game.

"What you believe yourself to be, you are." -- Claude M. Bristol

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!

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Testimonials:

“Thanks to your coaching I’ve been able to play to my potential more often and with greater pleasure. My perspective is better and I feel great. I look forward to each challenge.” –Jim Bounds, Amateur Golfer

“I listen to your putting tape every week. I am no longer agitated on the greens and am able to relax. My putting has gotten much better. I remember the positive thoughts expressed on the CD and use them. I am able to let go of negative thoughts or redirect them when they occur. Thanks.” -- Carol Adams, Amateur Golfer

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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.