

POSITIVE MENTAL IMAGERY

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*Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly
With Mental Coaching*

PHYSIOLOGY by Joan King

Psychology is the science of the mind and behavior.
Physiology deals with the functions and functioning of the physical body.

Are you using positive self-talk but sabotaging your game with your body language?

Non-Verbal Communication:

Recent research shows that the mind controls the body, and the body also communicates with the mind. Babies first learn to make their wishes known by pointing, shaking their heads, crying, arching their backs, smiling, etc. Actually most of our communication is done non-verbally, or as is more commonly known, body language. Adults communicate 55% of the time with non-verbal movements. Verbal communication consists of 38% tone, quality and volume and words and content are only 7%.

- For example, when you see someone standing in the fairway behind you with their hands on their hips, what is your perception of what that person is communicating to you?
- As you watch the pros on TV, what does their body language say to you?
- What is the message you are sending to your brain about your next shot?
- Do you stand up tall and walk briskly with confidence to your ball?
- Or, do you look defeated and slouch in the golf cart until it is your turn?
- Do you grimace when you miss a putt thereby reinforcing the memory of the missed putt in your unconscious?
- Are you “anchoring” (reinforcing) your missed shots with your body language?

Your body “speaks” to your mind, just as your mind instructs your body what to do. How you use your body determines what portion of your brain you are using. If you aspire to play like a champion, you need to walk, talk and have the posture of a champion golfer.

Verbal Communication:

Every thought or idea causes a physical reaction. Your thoughts can affect all of the functions of your body. WORRY thoughts trigger changes in the stomach that in time can lead to ulcers. ANGER thoughts stimulate your adrenal glands that put increased adrenaline in the blood stream, which causes many body changes including a speeded up golf swing. ANXIETY and FEAR thoughts affect your pulse rate.

Ideas that have a strong emotional content almost always reach the subconscious mind, because it is the feeling mind. Once accepted, these ideas continue to produce the same body reaction over and over again.

Develop a memory to replace a missed shot. Rehearse the swing that you do want either physically or in your mind. Focus on the “feel” and “tempo” of the swing. Rehearse the easy, smooth, effortless motion of the new swing in your mind. Anchor it into your unconscious by feeling the excitement of producing the new swing. When you tie it into your emotions it will be much easier to remember it the next time you stand over the ball.

How do we get out of the “tension trap” of listening to our minds that are creating distress in our bodies?

1. The first step on the ladder to mental calmness is awareness. Be aware of the tension created in your physical body by mentally scanning your body for tightness. Some examples are:
 - tension in the hands create too tight a grip on the golf club,
 - talking fast or with an anxious voice creates fast movements,
 - an ache in the stomach area causes a distraction,
 - clenching the teeth causes jaw tension,
 - facial nervous mannerisms such as biting the lower lip or holding the tongue between the teeth causes tension,
 - tension in the shoulders causes tightness in the shoulder muscles.

Consciously relax by telling yourself to **let go** of the tension by relaxing the muscles, or breathing into a suggestion such as *loose and limp muscles* in the tight area. As you let go of the tension, be aware of the resulting looseness and feeling of relaxation. (Listen to the PMI *Progressive Relaxation of the Mind & Body* for more body awareness.)

2. You are now ready to move up the ladder. The next step is to consciously relax your mind and become silent within to allow your unconscious mind to access the skills you have practiced.

A person goes to the library and asks for a certain book, but he keeps talking and does not listen for the information from the librarian. He continues to explain how badly he wants the book and how long he has been searching for it. In golf, we are continually

talking to others or ourselves about how we are doing. **Let go** of the chatter, become quiet, and listen instead to what your body is feeling, seeing and hearing.

3. Smile to reduce tension and relax your body. . Research has shown that smiling causes physiological changes in the body. Cortisol, the chemical that indicates stress in the body is reduced, and there is an increase in endorphins that elevate your mood and calm you down.

It's okay to fake a smile. If you put on a happy face, or just smile inside to yourself, your body responds as if the smile was genuine. The next time you are frowning over a missed putt or shot, turn the corners of your lips upward and hold it and notice the change in your physiology. This simple change will cause your physiology to change and put you in better state of mind and body to execute the next shot. When you smile you become more calm and relaxed by lowering your stress level.

If you just believe in yourself you can do whatever your heart desires. Just stand back and Smile and give yourself a chance.

4. At the top of the ladder you are now “being” instead of “doing”. Become consciously aware of yourself by becoming the observer. *Without judging*, be aware of your breathing, talking, walking, facial expressions, swinging of the club, and the interactions with other players. When you are watching yourself you are no longer thinking and are out of the “tension trap”.

5. Playing in the “Zone State” you have gone to a place inside your mind that is completely independent of the outside world. No matter what is happening out there on the golf course, you can be calm, at peace and in control inside.

Spring has arrived and with it the promise of new fresh growth. Clean out your mental closets of old ideas that no longer work for you. Pull out the straggly weeds and plant new ideas of letting go, relaxation, and experiencing being in the moment to produce new mental growth. Create a New World within that is always in control, confident, always ready to access your peak performances and has unlimited knowledge.

Access your true spirit. Enjoy your successes. Feel victorious and unstoppable. Know the truth of who you are and connect with your true Self that is always victorious.

Don't allow your mind to trick you into believing your worst. Don't allow your mind to keep reminding you of your missed shots. Keep your mind on track. Don't flip the switch that transfers your mind like railroad cars from one track to another. Stay on track in the present moment with images of your best shots. Feel the resulting good feelings of playing at your best. Don't go down the other track of bad memories and missed opportunities. Stay in the NOW. NOW is NEW. NOW is FUN. NOW is CREATIVE. Watch, feel, hear and enjoy!

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance!

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“Since listening to your tapes my handicap has lowered. Also, I am now more confident hitting difficult shots.”- ---Duane Sample

“Your “Progressive Relaxation of the Mind & Body” CD has changed my life! I’m amazed how calm I have become playing the game. Missed shots and unruly players don’t upset me anymore.

---Janet Bronstein

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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.

