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Introduction –

Very Important, Read This First!

Welcome to The Consistent Golf System. In this methodology document you get an outline of all the mental fundamentals that are needed before each shot you play in order to have the most chance possible of repeating your great golf shots. And the fundamentals outlined in this document are the elements that were present in every great golf shot you’ve ever hit, but you probably didn’t even know it.

But when I say, “great golf shot” I don’t necessarily mean a shot that produced a great result. For example, a golfer can get a hole in one by cold topping the ball along the ground and having it roll all the way into the hole. And although it was a great result it definitely wasn’t a great golf shot.

The great golf shots I’m talking about are the shots that give you a great feeling after you’ve hit them. The one or two great shots in a round that gives you hope and keeps you coming back for more! So please keep this in mind whenever I refer to the “great golf shots” you’ve hit.

Now to start with, I need to outline what the mental fundamentals are that helped you to hit your great golf shots. Then I’m going to explain how you’re going to make these fundamentals a habitual part of your own golf game. So without further ado, here are the seven mental fundamentals…

1. **Goal Setting** – Every great shot you’ve ever hit was considered great because you selected a target of where you wanted your ball to finish and your ball finished close to this target.

2. **Relaxation** – Every great shot you’ve ever hit was the result of you using only the muscles necessary to hit the shot to perfection. There was no tension in any of your muscles, other than those that were needed to perform the task to the best of your ability. This relaxation/tension control starts well before you ever hit a golf shot, as you will soon learn.

3. **Questions** – In order for you to hit any great shot, you had to ask the “right questions” before the shot. For example, deciding the necessary flight of the ball, what club would hit the ball the desired height and weight, where you wanted the ball to land etc, etc…

4. **Concentration** – Before and over every great shot you’ve ever hit, you had all of your focus and attention only on the task at hand. No other thoughts were distracting you.

5. **Visualization** – Before every great shot you visualized where you wanted your ball to go and how you would need to swing to produce that result.

6. **Triggers** – Before every great golf shot you moved your body with confidence and assurance. Also, your state of mind was such that it helped you to perform the shot to your potential rather than hindering you.

7. **Automatic Swing** – Just before every great golf shot you’ve ever hit you switched off your conscious mind and let your subconscious mind take over the role of swinging the club.
So these are all the mental elements that are needed before every shot you play IF you ever want to consistently repeat your great golf shots. And there is no point in only doing 6 of these fundamentals well. If you do you’ll still never play golf to your full potential on a consistent basis.

For example, let’s say you do six of these fundamentals perfectly before every golf shot, but you ask dumb questions like “where DON’T I want my ball to go?” or “what club should I hit?”

Well, sorry, but you’re just never going to be consistent if you ask these types of questions no matter what else you’re doing well. Another example is if you do everything mentally perfect before a shot, BUT you don’t switch from your conscious to your subconscious mind before swinging.

What’s the result?

A swing that is controlled by conscious thoughts, that’s what. And here’s an example of just some of the thoughts that will pop up as you’re swinging with your conscious mind…

- Make sure you don’t slice this one, there’s trouble over to the right
- Remember to keep your head still
- Don’t come over the top
- Keep your left arm straight
- Watch the ball
- Don’t swing too hard

Of course I could have added many more things to that list but I’m sure you get the point.

Every great swing you’ve made was controlled with your subconscious mind. And you can easily tell if your subconscious mind controlled any of your swings simply by being aware of your finish.

For example, if when you finish your swing you have a great deal of tension in your body then you have used your conscious mind to swing the club. Conversely, if when you finish your swing, you are in a relaxed position then that gives you great feedback that the shot was played with your subconscious mind.

The next time you play golf watch your playing partners closely and I promise you, you’ll see some very strange things at the end of their swings, and not very often will you see a relaxed finish.

So, you’ve just learned what mental elements were present before and during each great shot you hit, but how are we going to make them habits?

Well, first of all these mental fundamentals are obviously not habits otherwise you would hit great golf shots all the time. So the goal of this system is to turn each of the 7 mental fundamentals listed on the previous page into a habit, so you do them easily and naturally before every shot you play.

It’s been scientifically proven that a habit takes at least 21 days to form, but for most people it takes at least 30 days to form a habit and probably longer. And that’s why you’re
given a plan that takes 90 days to complete. That way if you complete the plan you’ll well and truly make the mental pre-shot routine you create into a habit.

A habit that you’ll use for the rest of your golfing life!

Now this system was difficult to create, because the mental fundamentals need to be adjusted to suit everyone’s different personality and style. So to cater for everyone this is what I suggest you do.

Follow the instructions to the letter for the first 30 days of the plan, but as you’re following along you’ll notice things that you can change to suit you and your personality. So remember these and then on Day 31 of the plan you’ll start creating your very own mental pre-shot routine that matches as closely as possible to what YOU did before and during your great golf shots.

Also on Day 31 in The Consistent Golf Plan you’ll see a finished mental pre-shot routine and the steps you’re going to be following are the exact same steps that were used to create this.

As you follow the instructions in the plan keep asking yourself “how can I make this mental process better?” If you do this, your mental pre-shot routine will be different to the model routine on Day 31, and so it should be. It will still include all the mental fundamentals that have been listed a couple of pages previous, but perhaps the order will be different, or the time you take will be different because of the type of person you are, or the sequence will be slightly different, etc, etc…

The amount of “work” involved in here may look daunting, but the end benefits are well worth it. For your own benefit please don’t go faster than is recommended, because, for one you’ll feel overwhelmed, and two you’ll not spend the time necessary to turn these fundamentals into habits.

This system is not a “quick fix”, rather it’s the only solution that will help you to consistently repeat those great shots that you know you can hit. And to get the most benefit out of this system you need to make these mental fundamentals into habits, and forming habits takes time.

So, please, please, just keep persevering with the instructions and if you don’t notice any immediate improvement in your consistency, don’t worry. As you follow along with the instructions you’ll feel awkward and you’ll feel uncomfortable, that is until these things are habits for you. To form a new habit is simple, but it’s not easy.

I don’t expect you to follow the instructions in the plan every day, but do “try” to. If you miss a day or two then simply carry on from where you left off. The minimum I suggest for great results is you complete at least 3 days of the plan per week. But if you can’t do that for any reason just do as much as you can when you can. You will still get better results than doing nothing at all.

So with all that being said, let’s get you started on the road to unbelievable golfing consistency. Here’s what I suggest you do to get started.

Quickly read this entire methodology, as this will give you a good idea as to what each stage is trying to achieve. Then go to your Consistent Golf Plan and in there you’ll find a detailed outline on what you should be doing on any particular day.
So go to it.

I look forward to hearing your success story soon and I have complete confidence in you succeeding, because the things outlined in here are not “quick fixes” - rather they are sound fundamentals. And all you have to do is make these fundamentals habits.

That’s the part you have to put effort into.

But just think how much more fun golf would be if you could consistently play to your potential. Well, the only way you’ll be able to do that is by following the instructions in this system.

So good luck and keep persevering, no matter what.

For Consistent Golf

Jeff Richmond
Director of Instruction
The Consistent Golf School
Mental Fundamental #1 - Goal Setting

"I attempt to hit every golf shot to a specific area of either fairway or green - sometimes even a specific spot. I don't always succeed, of course, but the exercise is important because of the positive focus it brings to both my mental visualization and my physical targeting procedure. In my experience, the more vaguely a golfer aims and aligns, the more vaguely he will swing."

Jack Nicklaus

Maybe you're wondering why this system has started with a goal setting chapter? Well, the answer to that question is simple. To play golf consistently to your potential you first need to...

“have a specific target for each and every shot you play!”

Yes I realize you've probably heard this a million times before today. But sadly a lot of golfers know what they should do, and yet they never do it! Can you honestly say that before each and every shot you have a definite, positive, specific target?

And by a specific target I don't mean the fairway or green. I mean a specific place on the fairway or green that you want your ball to finish.

If you can answer “yes” to that question, I applaud you. But for most of you it would be "no." Well, you're not along there and that's OK, because boy you'll improve so much just by implementing this one little fundamental into your golf game. I'm sure you'll agree that improving is so much fun!

To start your journey towards creating a repeatable, consistent, highly effective mental pre-shot routine, you must ask one simple question and then repeat a simple goal statement before each and every shot. This question and statement are not difficult to remember; yet the constant use of them before every shot will produce amazing, positive results for many years to come.

Before I give you this question and goal statement I want to make one thing ardently clear. If you do not get into the habit of repeating this question and statement before each and every shot, then the rest of this system is basically useless.

Why?

Because if you can't make the commitment to say one little question and statement before every shot, then what are the chances of you making the commitment needed to complete this system?

But, I believe in you, and I know you can and will start your positive improvement by making a firm decision to repeat this one question and goal statement before every single golf shot.

And to make this task a habit you must make a conscious effort to repeat this question and goal statement before each and every shot until it's firmly ingrained as a habit. But even
after this question and goal statement have become part of your pre-shot routine, and therefore transferred to your subconscious as a habit, I believe you should still **consciously affirm** this question and statement before each shot.

I am also a firm believer in not only giving you clear instructions on what you should do to become a better golfer, but also the reasons **why** you must keep doing them consistently. So here’s just some of the many reasons why you _must repeat this question and goal statement before each and every shot_...

1. It will direct your mind to focus on the **shot at hand** without focusing on your outcome, _i.e. your score or possible hazards._

2. It will focus your mind to a small precise target and your mind produces better results when the goal is **small** and **well defined**.

   "A golfer's brain and nervous system perform best when they're focused on a small, precise target."

   **Dr. Bob Rotella**

3. It will allow you to play each and every shot in the present.

4. By starting your routine with this question and statement it will form a trigger for your mind to **completely concentrate** on the task at hand to the exclusion of what has happened in the past or what may happen in the future.

**Can one question and statement really make these things happen?**

You bet it can. But I'll warn you, only **very special, persistent, courageous** people will not only try saying this question and statement before each shot, but keep doing it consistently. The reason I say this is because the question and statement themselves are not hard to remember or say, but it's what happens after that some golfers find to hard to bear.

You see this question and statement that I will share with you in a minute **forces you to focus on a small precise target for every shot you play.** But doing this is so foreign for most players that they try it for a few shots and give up because "it's just too hard."

What do I mean by "too hard?"

Well, most golfers know their own inadequacies in their game because they see them every time they play.

If a golfer aims at the fairway or green, as most golfers do, and they miss 7, 8 or 9 times out of 10, why in the world would they make their misses look even bigger by not only aiming at the fairway but at a **specific spot** on that fairway? That's where it becomes "too hard" for a lot of golfers who try this. But **PERSEVERING** is the key to success in using this.

You see, when you repeat the statement that I'll give to you in a minute, you'll consciously become aware of specifically what target you're aiming at. And because of this
newly found consciousness you'll also become very aware of how far away from your intended target your ball finishes.

"One sure sign of growing awareness is that you feel as if you are ‘getting worse.’ Awareness in sport, in relationships, in any learning often entails a momentary drop in self-esteem, a dent in our self-image. Because of built-in defense mechanisms, therefore, most of us have a tendency to resist awareness. It is important to understand and account for this internal resistance to awareness so that you can avoid discouragement and frustration that has caused some athletes to quit a sport just when they are beginning to become proficient because they imagine that they are "getting worse."

Dan Millman

This consciousness of how accurately you're hitting a ball will have an affect on you. For some this affect is all positive but for others it's negative, as they "feel" like a worse golfer even if in reality they are no worse, and often a better golfer after doing this.

In case this happens to you when implementing this question and goal statement I want to explain exactly why this happens so that you won’t give up. Also, I want to explain what will happen if you keep persevering, because the results are really amazing and worth any temporary feelings of frustration.

Let's say you're on a tee and your goal, like most golfers, is to “hit the fairway.” You hit a good tee shot that just rolls into the light rough 2 feet off the fairway. Most golfers would feel pretty pleased with this result, wouldn't they?

Now, what if you followed my advice and your goal was a sprinkler that’s in the middle of the fairway but you missed this target by a "HUGE" 15 yards and yet your ball still finishes in the fairway? The difference between the two misses is massive, but the result is better with the 15-yard miss because the target was smaller. However, your brain generally won’t see it like that.

If you keep persevering with picking small targets and your brain is still having difficulty accepting whatever results are produced and you’re frustrated with your very visible lack of dexterity, then your brain will eventually instruct you to "pick a bigger target, stupid!"

If this happens to you please use every ounce of courage you have to resist and to continue selecting small targets, because the results in the end will be worth any initial heartache or discouragement.

I must mention that for some golfers who start selecting small targets their ball striking doesn't only seem to get worse, it actually does. The reason for this is tension, which is produced by the mind.

Why?

Because of the small precise target, some golfers "try" to hit the ball to that target. Now "trying" as well intentioned as it is, produces tension and tension is one of the biggest killers of a golf shot. As strange as this may sound you mustn't try to hit the ball to the target you select. And the harder you try, the worse you will get.
If you have any negative responses to consciously picking small targets and you keep persevering through tension or a feeling of getting worse then eventually something strange, yet magical, will happen.

You will eventually let go of "trying" and become more relaxed about your perception of results. Also, you’ll have less conscious thoughts as to how you should hit your ball to your target. This is because your conscious mind will just shut down and accept no responsibility for achieving your goal because it's just “too hard!”

Luckily when this happens you have your subconscious mind to take over and if you don’t already know, the subconscious mind performs any task that's given to it automatically. For example.....

- When you drive a car, you don’t think about every little movement because your subconscious does the driving for you (once you’ve mastered this skill).
- When you walk you don’t think about every little movement, you just walk.
- When you eat you don’t think about how you’re moving your knife and fork, you just do it.

So, the ultimate goal for your golf swing is to make it as automatic as driving a car, walking or eating and that’s what this system and plan is “helping” you to work towards. But first you must start off asking one question, followed by one simple little goal statement, before each and every shot.

Unfortunately, I can’t give you an exact point in time when you will start "letting go" or when your conscious mind will shut down over shots, because the time frame is different for everyone. The most important thing is that you never give up, not even after you’ve hit a bad shot.

Always pick a small precise target for every shot, no matter what!

"Every individual goes through periods when he does a lot of the right things - practicing efficiently, thinking well - and gets no immediate, tangible results. This is the point where successful people bring to bear the powers of faith, patience, persistence, and will. Faith is the ability to believe without any tangible evidence."

Dr. Bob Rotella
**Question + Goal/Target Statement**

So after this big build up I will now give you the **question** and **goal statement** which you **MUST** ask before each shot you play...

| **Question To Ask Before Every Shot –** |
| **“Where do I want my ball to finish?”** |

From this question you’ll pick a **specific spot** and then you should say the following **goal/target statement** and fill in the blanks…..

"My **goal** for this (insert name of the shot, e.g. putt, chip, bunker shot, drive, long iron shot, pitch etc.) is for **my ball** to **finish** (name the spot that you’ve chosen for you ball to finish, e.g. the hole, a specific patch of grass on the fairway or green or some other easily identifiable and namable target.)"

Here’s a working example of this **question** and **goal statement** in action….

"Where do I want my ball to finish?"
So from this answer here's the goal statement…

“*My goal for this ‘putt’ is for my ball to finish in the hole.*”

![Diagram showing the golfer looking at their ball and then at the target, followed by visualizing the ball in the hole.]

**Simple isn’t it?**

If for whatever reason you don’t like the **question** or **goal statement** please feel free to make up your own question or statement, but here are some success rules that you should follow...

- The **question** you ask must focus your mind on where you want your ball to finish.
- The word **goal** or **target** must be in your statement.
- You must make some reference to your **ball** in your statement.
- You must state specifically where you want your ball to **finish** at the end of your statement.

Now, depending on the level of golfer you are, and after actually seeing this question and statement for the first time you may be thinking….

"*I'm just not good enough to pick small, precise targets. I have a hard enough time just hitting the ball!*"
To be honest, I can totally understand your skepticism. But asking a question that specifies where you want your ball to finish and then saying a goal statement before every shot is critical to your long-term success. By doing this it focuses your mind precisely on where you want your ball to go.

If you think about it, doesn't it make a lot more sense to focus on where you want your ball to go precisely rather than aiming at some big expanse of earth? Look at it this way….

Imagine a plane having a destination of only a city instead of a specific airport in that city. Imagine a bus having a destination of a town instead of a specific bus stop in that town. Imagine a large ship having a destination of a country instead of a specific port at that country. Imagine a golf ball having a destination as the fairway instead of a specific part of that fairway!!!

This last paragraph, as clearly as it demonstrates the absolute necessity of aiming all golf shots at something specific, could also mislead you into thinking that you may fail if you don't reach your destination. And that could not be further from the truth!

If planes, buses and ships don't reach their specific destinations then they would be considered to have failed. But golfers who choose specific destinations and then don't achieve them have not failed.

Why?

Because golf is only a game, and as such you can set the rules that govern what has to happen for you to feel like a success. You must also understand that there is no failure using this goal statement there are only varying degrees of success.

In fact, I'm going to go further than that to say that there is no failure and I'm here to tell you that failure is virtually impossible - if you want it to be!

What do I mean?

Well, for you to feel like a failure after any golf shot you have to evaluate your result in certain ways, and the way you evaluate what you term a failure is very different from what you evaluate and label a successful golf shot.

You control whether you feel like a success or a failure after any shot. The shot does not produce these feelings – YOU DO! And you can feel like either a success or a failure after any golf shot depending on the ‘rules’ you set for golf.

If you want to make golf as enjoyable as possible then you should make it as easy as you can to succeed and as hard as possible to fail!

To explain what your ‘rules’ for success and failure are and how they are formed, I want you to remember the very first couple of swings you ever took at a golf ball. What were your rules for success or failure when you were starting to play golf?

Wasn't it whether or not you hit the ball?
And wasn't it true that you felt fantastic as long as you moved the ball forward? And if the ball got up in the air you would've felt over the moon with excitement, wouldn’t you?

So your rules for success or failure when first starting would’ve been a feeling of success when you hit the ball, and a feeling failure in not hitting the ball. Those are pretty simple rules that define your feelings of success or failure, aren’t they?

Do you still have those rules setup for either the success or failure of a shot? Let's see what your rules are now, shall we?

So, right this instant, describe (in the space below) what has to happen to your shots during a round of golf in order for you to feel successful?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Golfers give all sorts of responses to this. For example…..

• "I must not be slicing my shots" or,
• "I must hit the ball within 10 feet of my target" or,
• "I must hole all putts inside 4 feet" or,
• "I must be hitting shots close to where I want."

For others their success rules may be….

• "I have to swing and move my ball forward!" or,
• "To feel like a success I have to hit the ball."

Now here’s another question that I would like you to answer. Describe (in the space below) what has to happen to your shots during a round of golf in order for you to feel like a failure?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

So what did you discover and who defined these rules for you as to what success and failure are? I bet you probably didn't sit down and consciously think them through did you?

And I say that very seriously.

Golf is only a game and as a game you obviously want to enjoy playing it as much as you possibly can. So, are the rules that define a golf shot as either a success or failure enhancing your enjoyment or are they making it easier for you to feel bad?
If you have rules setup so you are feeling like a *success* the majority of the time, then that's great.

And by the way, you can tell if you have easy *success* rules by asking yourself whether you achieve your rule for *success* on the majority of your shots.

If, on the other hand, you have rules that make it easier for you to feel like a *failure* than a *success*, then you **must** create new rules that make the feeling of *success* much easier to achieve.

Maybe you're thinking that if you made your rules for *success* easy, then you would lose motivation. If you think this then I've got a very important question to ask you.

> "*When your success was determined by whether or not you hit the ball, did you lack motivation?*"

No, of course you didn't!

Why?

Because as I have already said, when you first hit the ball you would've felt great. And if you hit the ball up in the air then you would've felt ecstatic. And if you hit the ball up in the air and in the general direction you wanted it to go, you would've felt almost the best you've ever felt.

This is what the term *varying degrees of success* means and this rule should not change no matter what level of golfer you are.

Like a beginner you should view any shot in which YOU MOVE the ball as a success because this will teach you to feel a *renewed excitement about the game* just like you did when you first started playing.

Obviously the closer your ball finishes to your final goal/target the more successful your shot is. The important point to remember is that any swing that actually moves the ball forward is a successful one and then the closer that ball finishes to your goal/target the higher the degree of success!

For some of you, the feeling of having a rule that lets you feel like a *success*, even after what appears like a bad shot, may feel like cheating. But I want to assure you that in the long run, being able to approach the next shot with the knowledge that you at least succeeded to some small degree will do your game and confidence a lot more benefit than the alternative.

*Can you see that point?*

Maybe you can, maybe you can’t, and if you can’t here's one more very important question that’s hopefully going to show you the merit in setting up easy *success* rules.

> "*What benefit is there in 'feeling' like you have failed?"*
And the key distinction is "feeling" like a failure and not the failing itself. You see failing is a very positive experience but only when you learn something from it. But, as far as I can see, feeling like a failure has no positive benefit whatsoever. When you hit a shot that you term a failure you may think it will help you to be aware of your failing and “feeling bad” may help you to improve in the future.

Although it's true that setting up standards that you expect and aspire to achieve is good, the “feeling” of failure when you don't achieve them is not good and this will NOT encourage your learning or enhance your enjoyment.

You could be thinking that by setting up easy success rules you won't have the same awareness of your failings as you did before. I can tell you without a shadow of a doubt that if you setup an easy success rule like “if I hit the ball I'm a success” and you hit a bad shot then you will know you can do better, without the feeling of failure attached to the shot.

In fact, if you try this easy success rule your awareness will go up, but it will be a different kind off awareness; one that is much more beneficial to your learning.

The important point to remember is that you don't need to feel like you have "failed" to notice you can do something better!

If you can see the positive benefits of feeling like a success on the majority of your shots, then here's what I suggest you do. First of all, consciously setup a rule that makes it easy for you to feel like a success and hard for you to feel like you have failed.

"The last thing you want to do is get discouraged. You've got to go ahead and play the next shot like it's the only one you'll ever hit."

Julius Boros

Before I give you a success rule that I believe you should try I want to make it crystal clear once and for all what the difference is between “failing” and “feeling like a failure.”

You see there is nothing wrong with failure because you will learn more from failing than you ever will from succeeding. So this easy success technique is NOT about trying to avoid failing, it's all about trying to avoid the negative feelings and emotions that go along with a failure mindset.

So remember this, failing can be a positive experience because it means you will have more opportunity to learn from your mistakes. And the more mistakes you make the more opportunity there is to learn, and the faster you learn the quicker you'll improve!

The one big problem with failure is that when most people fail they don't see it as a positive experience, one that they can learn from, so they get into what is termed a failure mindset, and this is not conducive to good, consistent results. So, all that “easy success rules” are trying to avoid is the “negative mindset” attached to a perceived failure.

So even if you’re a really good golfer or you have been playing golf for a long time and you think you are beyond setting a success rule as simple as hitting a ball, please just give it a try. You will be very surprised at your different, more positive and enthusiastic approach to the game.
Also instead of criticizing and analyzing your shots you will have a relaxed awareness when you watch where they finish and you will naturally know when a shot is not up to your expected standard without labeling it as a “failure.”

Hitting shots with a success rule that you’ve committed yourself to will enable you to play shots with a reasonable amount of confidence, because at least you would’ve experienced some positive success on the previous shots, simply by hitting the ball. And once again, that mindset has got to help more than approaching shots with a negative ball.

In fact, you will probably experience the same natural feelings of excitement that you had when you first started playing, and that makes golf a great deal more fun than feeling bad because of a harsh failure rule. Here’s some examples of success & failure rules that you can try:

**Success Rule - "I feel like a success when I move my ball forward"

Failure Rule - "I feel like I have failed when I don't move my ball forward"

Or

**Success Rule - "I feel like a success when I hit the ball"

Failure Rule - "I feel like I have failed when I don't hit the ball"

I personally like the first statement best because it doesn't have the word “hit” in it. And for some shots you don't hit the ball anyway. For example, bunker shots.

But what I suggest you do is just try one of these success rules the next time you play or hit some balls and I can promise you, you will feel more positive, more enthusiastic and in a better state of mind approaching each new shot.

You can change the rules in which you measure the success or failure of a shot at any time. But remember, your rules should make it easy to succeed and hard to fail.

I initially used the success rule "I feel like a success when I move the ball forward". But now I have changed my success rule to "I feel like a success when I complete my mental pre-shot routine and/or I learn something from the shot."

This is such a good rule because even if I don't completely do my mental pre-shot routine for whatever reason, but I still learn from not doing it, then I've succeeded. So, in reality as long as I learn from whatever I've done then I'm a success!

This may be a rule that you can possibly use after you too have an easily repeatable mental pre-shot routine. But in the meantime, use one of the suggested success rules or one similar to feel like more of a success and thus a happier golfer more consistently.

Let's now look at a practical example of using your question, goal statement and your new rule to play a shot. Say you have a six foot putt, so you'd ask .....
“Where do I want my ball to finish?”

And the answer?…that's right in the hole. So after answering this question you say…

“My goal for this putt is for my ball (say this while looking at your ball) to finish in the hole (and then look at the hole when saying where you want the ball to finish).”

But that's not all, next you have to see the ball in your mind's eye actually in the place that you want it to finish, which in this case is in the hole. This is a very important step that must not be overlooked.

Let's say, after doing this you end up missing the putt (just) but you have a success rule that says "if you move your ball forward then you are a success." Although you won't feel as happy as you obviously would feel if the ball had finished in the hole at least you had a small victory from the shot.

This small victory/success is of critical importance to maintaining a high level of enjoyment in this game.

Why?

Because a man by the name of Dave Pelz has done extensive research into putting and found that pro’s miss six footers 50% of the time! So if you’re not a pro you will probably
miss six footers more than 50% of the time, and if you had the hole as determining your
success or failure then for over half your putts from 6 feet you would feel like a "failure".

I can assure you that as you get further away from 6 feet the odds on holing a putt drop
away quite quickly. At least if you have a success rule that means you can still feel "OK" even
after a missed putt instead of feeling "lousy," then that difference in feelings will be very
important to your ongoing enjoyment and motivation levels in this game.

Let's now say you have a 30 footer. What should your answer be to this question –
“where do I want my ball to finish?”. I hope you answered “in the hole” because I believe
no matter what level of golfer you are, the goal of all short game shots should be to hole the
ball.

The term short game is different for everybody, but I think it’s best defined by anything
less than a full wedge swing.

Once you have less than a full wedge shot to a pin then that should be the time you
start to focus on the hole as where you want the ball to finish. If you hit a full wedge from 70
yards then any shot less than that should have the hole as the target.

So back to the 30 foot putt, with your final goal as the hole.

You should say "My goal for this putt is for my ball (say this while looking at your
ball) to finish in the hole (and then look at the hole when saying where you want the ball to
finish)," and of course you visualize the ball sitting in the hole.

You may be thinking, “what about visualizing the ball going in the hole?” or you may
think that you are not a good visualizer.

First of all if you think you are not good at visualizing I want you to know that your
visualization skills are just like a muscle, and like any other muscle it needs exercising.

So if you think you’re not a good visualizer this is a great place to start improving. And
don't worry about visualizing rightly or wrongly, because there is no such thing when it
comes to visualization.

Now, let's move on to longer shots.

Say you've got a 5-iron into the green. Can the target be the hole on a shot this long?
Absolutely it can! Remember a small precise target is ideal. A hole is exactly that and it
even has a nice big pin in it to help you aim!

Obviously once you have a shot outside your short game threshold distance, where you
are attempting to hole a shot then you have to way up the risks vs the rewards in playing a
shot directly at the pin.

If the pin is in what is termed a sucker placement then maybe you will decide it is safer
to aim at a spot 30 feet to the right or left of the pin. In this case you would have to pick out a
spot on the green that you can describe and then state that as your finishing position.

Ok, what about tee shots, surely you can't aim at a precise target with a driver can you?
Absolutely, and you must.
If a hole has trouble all down the left then the smart play would be to aim at a specific spot in the right of the fairway. So do exactly that, pick out a specific spot that you can identify and name and aim at that.

Also remember your success rule so even if you miss your intended finishing target by miles you will still feel somewhat of a success - and that is really important.

“Picking a target, saying the goal statement with your intended finishing position and then visualizing where exactly you want the ball to finish is what you MUST do before every shot, if you ever want to play to your potential consistently.”

At the end of this chapter I am going to give you some tested and proven techniques that will help you to follow-through and act on this information so you not only do this exercise today, but keep on doing it.

Remember knowledge is not power, but knowledge coupled with action is ultimate power. So to sum up what you must do before each and every shot......

1. Ask this question first as you’re standing behind your ball – “Where do I want my ball to finish?” and when you have your answer go to the next step....

2. Repeat the following statement to yourself (putting in the specific shot you are playing i.e. bunker shot, putt, chip etc., and the specific place you want your ball to finish).

"My goal for this (chip, bunker shot, drive, iron shot etc.) is for my ball (look at your ball when saying this) to finish (name your target)"

3. Visualize/See your ball positioned exactly where you want it to finish.

Also, remember your rule for success will determine what feelings you have after a shot, (i.e. “success” or “failure” feelings). So you must consciously choose what has to happen in order for you to feel like a success after a shot and very importantly makes it easy to feel like a success and hard to feel like a failure.

Once again here is a couple of success rules that will help you to feel like a success most of time, so give one of them a try:

**Success Rule** - "I feel like a success when I move my ball forward", or

**Success Rule** - "I feel like a success when I hit the ball"

To finish off this section on picking precise targets I want to cover something that, when you come across it, will make it harder for you to define where you want your ball to finish. What I’m talking about are blind shots and doglegs.

"What are you going to do when you have a shot that you can’t see where you want your ball to finish?"
When you are close to the green and you are faced with a blind shot either because of trees or because the green is above you then you can 99 times out of 100 walk up to a point where you can see and clearly define your final target.

When you get to a good vantage point then ask “where do I want my ball to finish?” and then use your goal statement and picture your ball at your goal. Then walk back to your ball keeping this image fresh in your mind.

Once back to your ball stand behind it facing your target and ask your question again and say your goal statement as before and then once again imagine your ball sitting there.

You will be able to do this on most other longer shots as well, but sometimes you won’t. The cases I’m talking about here are when you’re standing on a tee and you have a blind tee shot or the hole is a dogleg. To physically see your target would mean you have to walk a long way, which would hold up people behind you.

If you are faced with these situations on a course you know well, then it’s not too big a deal.

Simply play a practice round and on the holes which you can’t see or identify a target go to a spot you would like most of your drives to finish, and name that spot specifically inside your head. Then place a ball there and once done look at the ball in relation to that spot so you get a good mental image of your ultimate finishing goal.

Here’s an example of how this works.

Let’s say the 5th hole at your home course is a straightforward par 4, but the hole is on two levels (an upper and lower level.) The first part of the fairway is on the upper level which is flat and then about 230 yards from the tee there is a steep hill that goes down to a second level which leaves a flat 130 yards to the green.

You, being the long hitter you are, expect to hit the ball down the hill so your target is not visible from the tee.

In a practice round you should play the hole as normal but as you get down the bank you must pick out an easily identifiable spot where you want your ball to finish.

Let’s say you pick a sprinkler that is at the bottom of the hill in the middle of the fairway so you should say, “My goal for my drive on the 5th hole is for my ball to finish touching the first sprinkler in the middle of the fairway just over the hill.”

After saying this statement you should place a ball so it touches the sprinkler and then take a few seconds to look at it and get a good picture in your mind of where you want your ball to finish and then pick up your ball and keep playing.

Doing this will help you tremendously the next time you are faced with your tee shot on the 5th hole because you know precisely where you want your ball to finish and you can name it.

So now you know what to do on blind tee shots this same procedure can be used on dogleg shots as well, or any shot for that matter. Sometimes you will be playing a new course
and you may only be planning on playing it once so what do you do when faced with a blind/dogleg shot?

Well, you have to break the rules and aim not at a specific identifiable spot but you can only aim at a general identifiable spot, for example, the middle of the fairway. In this situation because you have never played the course before you have to get as specific as you possibly can with the information you can get.

So standing on the tee of a blind/dogleg hole, you must first find out the shape of the fairway, i.e. does it curve from left to right or vice versa and is the dogleg big or small or is it a straight hole?

Once you’ve established the fairway shape the next step is to ask yourself the question “where do I want my ball to finish?” And from that question pick a specific, identifiable spot on the line in which you believe the middle of the fairway to be, and then aim for your ball to finish directly on a line with that target.

On these blind shots on a course that you've never played before you have to change your goal statement.

For example, on a blind tee shot let's say you are using a big easily identifiable trunk of a tree as your line target. Your goal statement should be something like this, "My goal for this shot is for my ball to finish inline with the trunk of that tree," and as you are saying this you should be looking at the specific tree and imagining your ball inline with that tree.

"I divide my thinking two ways. My first rule is to think positively in all situations. That means both (1) eliminating any negative thoughts, like those about the locations of a hazard or out-of-bounds, and (2) being confident in my decision-making.

Every time you pull a club, promise yourself you're 100 per cent committed to that shot. If you have any doubts, step away and start your pre-shot routine all over again. My second rule is, be specific when you aim. If you've chosen to aim at a tree off the tee, hone in on a particular leaf on that branch."

Nick Price

Any other situation you get into where your final target is very hard to define, and there will be many of these, then you must use your imagination. Simply imagine where you want your ball to finish and pick a final resting-place even if it's not real. Just be as specific as you can be within the confines of your imagination.

Now before you start putting anything I'm giving you into action, I've got a very important question that needs answering.

Why are you doing this?

Do you know?

You should do. And the more reasons you can come up with the more chance you’ve actually got of following through and completing this system.
So before you do anything I want you to figure out the reasons why you’re going to put this system/plan into action. You need to have very strong reasons both why you should do it, and what you’ll miss out on if you don’t.

Here are some possible examples you could use for motivation…

**Why I’m 100% committed to completing this course?**

- Because I know this is the start of me becoming a more consistent golfer and I'm determined to complete this course from start to finish.
- I will complete this course so I can prove to myself that I am not only prepared, but also capable of following-through on useful and helpful information.
- I will complete this course so I can form a positive beneficial habit that will stay with me for the rest of my golfing life, and this can only be to my advantage.
- I will complete this course so I can build up my pre-shot routine one step at a time and I know that at each stage I will become a more complete and better golfer. But I can't go to the next step until I can regularly do this one task, which I'm prepared and willing to do.
- I will make a commitment to myself to complete this course so I can get the most benefit out of it. And because I want to become the best possible golfer I can be.

**What it will cost me if I don't complete this course?**

- If I don't complete this course it will prove that I am a quitter and I don't follow-through even on the simplest of things.
- If I don't complete this course it will mean that I will probably never, ever know how much fun I can have and how good I could've become.
- If I don't complete this course it will mean that I will forever remain inconsistent and I will always wonder if it would have helped if I'd stuck with it.
- If I don't complete this course it will prove that I'm not really that interested in improving my golf game and I'm happy with all the bad shots I hit.
- If I don't complete this course it will be just another thing I've tried, but this time it will be my fault for my failure because I have not stuck with the program.

You see the reasons of what it will cost you are really, really important in making sure that you follow-through. The stronger negative reasons you can think up the better.

*"The more reasons for not quitting the better!"*

You must have so many negative associations to not following through that you are driven easily to complete whatever task you want.

So once again, now it's your turn to write some truly convincing reasons as to why you must complete this course, and remember, the more emotional reasons as to what it will cost you if you don't do this the better.

Start writing your reasons for completing this course now in the space provided below.

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Mental Fundamental #2 - Relaxation

"A tense mind breeds tense muscles, and tense muscles make you feel clumsy, out of gear."

Jack Nicklaus

Why a relaxation section just after a goal setting chapter? Well, to have the greatest chance of hitting your shots to the targets you’ve chosen you need to learn to relax, because tension goes along with trying, and trying fails!

Why does trying fail?

I believe a large part of it has to do with tension. If you try too hard in golf to force a result (i.e. your score) then you'll have way too much tension in your muscles - tension that doesn't need to be there. Playing golf with too much tension GUARANTEES you'll never, ever, ever play consistently to your potential.

Remember the free and easy movements that have produced your best ever golf shots. The times when it was like you were on auto pilot! Then there's the other extreme of the stiff, awkward feeling of hitting your worst ever golf shots.

Which would you prefer to hit, a great golf shot or a bad one?

I know that's a dumb question, but how committed to hitting consistently great golf shots are you? If you are truly committed and I believe you are otherwise you wouldn't be reading this right now, then you need to make a few small sacrifices and learn how to relax.

In fact, the only small sacrifice that you have to make in learning how to relax is allocating time to do the exercises in here. And as the exercises only require you to listen to and follow the instructions while lying down, it's not really that hard! Not a bad way to dramatically improve your golf game is it?

The major difference between a great golf shot and a poor one is the amount of tension that is in the muscles used during the swing. When you have too much tension in any part of your body while swinging a club you'll be ruining any chance of hitting a shot to the best of your ability. And to prove my point I want to share with you a small exercise....

1. Place your dominant forearm and hand palm down on a tabletop or desk.
2. Now tense all the muscles in your hand and fingers and while holding this tension raise and lower your index finger as fast as possible so you tap the table or desk repeatedly.
3. Now relax your hand and fingers and raise and lower your index finger as fast as possible.

Notice the Difference?

I'm sure if you've done that last exercise you would've learnt just how important relaxation is. You would've also noticed that too much tension causes your movements to be slow and clumsy and your results will be well below your potential no matter what you're doing. To avoid too much tension you need to be taught to recognize it and then learn how to relax or release the tension.
Before we go any further lets clarify what tension and relaxation are.

You can only ever have either tension or relaxation in any part of your muscles at one time. And for **a muscle to be tense** it must be contracted and in use. Even the smallest mental or bodily activity causes the contraction of some muscles.

At this very moment you have tension throughout your body, just as you are reading this! Take a moment now to scan your body to see what muscles are tense (*i.e. in use*). Maybe you find that you're using muscles that aren't necessary to read this, for example;

- Are you sitting stiffly?
- Are your **shoulders** raised up towards your ears?
- Are your legs crossed?
- Are you **tapping your feet**?
- Are you fidgeting any part of your body?

**Is it possible to relax those muscles that aren't needed to read this just a bit more?**

If the answer is "yes" to that last question and some of the questions above, then you are not as relaxed as you can be and your muscles will be working harder than they need to. These relatively small tensions of your muscles being contracted when they don't need to be will lead to a build up in pressure that produces irritability, which in turn leads to mistakes, tiredness and other problems.

When you watch anyone hit a great golf shot it seems effortless because they are only using the necessary amount of muscular tension to hit the shot to the best of their ability. And when you've hit a great golf shot you have moved your body in the most efficient manner with the least amount of energy.

As golfers we generally need very low levels of tension in our bodies to play to our potential consistently. Golfers, like archers and shooters, require more control than aggression which can be found in sports like basketball and soccer.

The major difference between, say, golf and basketball is that golf is a slow game, and this means we have lots of time to think, and when we're playing badly it feels like we have too much time to think!!

Learning how to relax your body quickly and easily will allow you to control tension and anxiety because these states cannot manifest themselves in a relaxed body and mind.

To ever become a consistent golfer you absolutely must learn the exercises that I give you. This is because being able to control the tension in your body allows you **to repeat what you've done when you have hit your greatest ever golf shots**!

Poor golfing performances, which are the results of worry and anxiety, can be easily cured by doing the exercises I give. So if you choose not to do them you will be causing yourself a lot of needless frustration. But I know you **hate** being frustrated on the golf course so you'll do them, won't you?

But relaxation is a skill that must be practiced on a regular basis for it to become a habit. And anyone who has learnt to relax is more likely to **live longer** than someone who is a constant worrier.
Ok, now that you have a good understanding of the importance of relaxation I'm now going to tell you how you're going to improve it, so you play much better golf.

**Progressive Relaxation**

To teach you how to relax your body we're going to do something called *Progressive Relaxation*. It's called progressive relaxation because you *progress* from *one muscle group to another* as you learn to relax.

The concept behind progressive relaxation is that it teaches you how to relax by consciously *producing as much tension as possible* in a muscle group, learning to identify that tension, then "*letting go*" so all the tension is released. By continuously doing this you get an acute awareness of what it feels like to have an absence in tension in your muscles.

The ULTIMATE GOAL of consistently using Progressive Relaxation is to develop your acuity to tension, whereby you *automatically, unconsciously* and *effortlessly* identify and relax tensions that interfere with the smooth execution of your golf swing!

You cannot think without tension and to prove it, try this exercise! *(To do this exercise you must be sitting.)*

- Sit with your legs uncrossed and have your feet flat on the floor with your hands placed in your lap and *let your head fall forward* as though you've fallen asleep, just let your head hang naturally.
- Now make the *biggest grimace with your face muscles* and tightly close your eyes as you're doing so. *Hold this position for a second and let it go.*
- Repeat this tension of the face muscles again, and this time as you open your eyes *pay close attention to what happens to your eyes*. You'll notice that just for a split second they remain relaxed and motionless.
- Repeat this tension of the face muscles and *identify what happens to your eyes* again.
- Now repeat this exercise one more time *BUT* upon opening your eyes think about something that you memorized a long time ago. *Can you now feel the tension and movement in your eyes as you thought about this event a long time ago.*

This proves that you cannot think without tension and you basically think while using your muscles.

You've probably heard about REM (*rapid eye movement*) which happens when someone is dreaming, and this has proven to researches that we *do not* dream or process anything mentally without some muscular tension. Tension is a prerequisite for expressing our thoughts and words.

One of our major goals in learning to relax is to minimize any thoughts going through our head just before and during our golf swings. By *learning to relax the facial muscles you can stop thoughts*, and since we don't hit the golf ball with our head we don't need any tension in those muscles!
This means that if you take the time to do the exercises I give you, you'll get to experience the amazing thrill of hitting shot after shot without any distracting thoughts buzzing around in your head.

**Won't that be great?**

Progressive relaxation teaches you how to relax all the muscles except those needed for the task at hand. Won't it be great to hit shots without a bunch of other thoughts coming into your head while you're swinging the club?

Also, if you have sleeping problems, by learning to relax you'll be able to get to sleep faster and have a better nights sleep. Furthermore, as you become proficient in relaxation you'll find that you do not build up so much tension throughout a normal day and as a result you'll be more relaxed and when you practice relaxation you won't have so much tension to get rid of.

After learning to relax you'll be able to handle pressure better, you'll be able to concentrate better on the golf course, and you'll be able to visualize more easily.

"So if learning to relax is so good and offers all of these great benefits, why doesn't everyone do it?"

Well I suppose the biggest down side of learning to relax is the time it takes to really learn to do it effectively, and the fact that like any skill it must be used regularly to remain as effective. **But the time that it takes to learn to relax is surely worth the sacrifice when the benefits are as great as hitting shots as well as your best ones!**

After learning how to do Progressive Relaxation you'll then learn Differential Relaxation. Differential Relaxation will give you the skills to use only the muscles needed to perform any golf shot to the best of your ability.

**This is a very important golfing skill to have, as it means you only use the least amount of energy to hit each shot as well as you possibly can.**

Let's now have a look at what is needed before you start your Progressive Relaxation exercise.

**Instructions For Progressive Relaxation (CD #2)**

♦ Get as comfortable as possible and it's best to do **these exercises lying on a bed.**
♦ You need to do Progressive Relaxation exercises in a relatively **quiet, distraction-free** area with a **comfortable temperature**, because it's almost impossible to relax in a cold room! Also you can turn out the lights or dim them, it's up to you. **Tell anyone at home not to disturb you** for at least half an hour and also take the phone off the hook or put the answer phone on.
♦ **Do not** carry out any relaxation exercise within **about 2 hours of a meal** because relaxation does not come easily when you have a full stomach.
♦ **Remove any tight clothing and your shoes.**
♦ Take out any **hard contact lenses**, as you can relax more easily with your eyes closed.
♦ If you have an injury in a muscle you may want to avoid tensing that muscle and make sure that the injured part of your body is well supported and comfortable. **If you have any pain while doing these exercises stop what you're doing immediately!**
♦ If you feel restless and uncomfortable then that is a good indicator of excessive body tension. So get as comfortable as you can by lying on your back with your heels inwards and your toes outwards and have your legs straight down beneath you. Your hands should be at your side a little way from your thighs. Have your hands palm up with your fingers comfortably bent.

♦ You may want to have a pillow to support your neck and/or a pillow under your knees to increase your comfort levels.

♦ It's easier to learn to relax after exercise so if you exercise regularly you should do these relaxation exercises after your physical exercise.

♦ Some people become anxious when they are learning to relax because they feel like they're losing control. If you feel like this you should remind yourself that learning to relax is gaining control rather than losing it, because you're out of control when you cannot eliminate unnecessary tension when you want!

♦ Don't try to hold any body part still because that effort causes tension! Let the bed support and hold you and let relaxation happen naturally, don't force it. You mustn't try to relax, just follow the instructions.

♦ Any conscious effort to try to relax will just cause tension. The process of relaxation is where you give up the tension, you let go and allow your muscle fibers to elongate.

♦ When learning and practicing relaxation techniques you may become aware of little twitches or spasms that occur in your muscles. These happen when a muscle lets go of its tension, so it's actually a good sign.

♦ If you are following the instructions and you feel like you are not accomplishing much, keep persisting. Relaxation is a skill, and as such, you must keep practicing it to improve.

♦ Relaxation is learn by constant and consistent practice. Once you've learnt how to relax then you'll be able to relax anywhere and in any situation. So keep persisting because the benefits are HUGE once you've learned this skill!

**Differential Progressive Relaxation (CD #3)**

Differential Progressive Relaxation carries on from the previous exercise, but the major difference between the two is that some of the smaller areas have been taken out and it doubles up on the feet, legs, arms etc. to save time. Instead of holding each muscle group twice, you hold the first time as hard as possible, then repeat but only with half as much tension. The third hold is with just enough tension to recognize it.

This exercise is great for us golfers, because it allows us to sense the differences between varying degrees of tensions. And in the golf swing we only need enough tension to perform the action at hand and no more.

Once you've learned and used these exercises for at least a month you'll then be able to relax anywhere, at anytime. Won't that be great?! For example, you can use this tension and relaxation technique on the golf course anytime you are feeling a bit tense. Simply tense the group of muscles that are tight, hold, and then relax. You can even do this before shots to reduce the chance of tension during the stroke.

One of the most common places for golfers, and people in general, to have excessive tension is in the neck and shoulders area. So if you feel anxious or worried notice the tension in these areas and if you do find them tense, simply tense, hold, relax, and repeat if necessary.

When you release the tension from these two areas it tends to spread relaxation to the rest of your body, which will have a calming effect on your mind.
Now another very good way to calm your mind and also calm your body, is to practice relaxation breathing so this is what we’re going to have a look at next.

**Breathing For Relaxation (CD #4)**

Learning to breathe correctly will not only allow you to relax anywhere and anytime but it will increase the amount of oxygen in your blood, which will give you *increased energy* and help to remove waste products from your body.

*It is also generally recognized that correct breathing has a very important role in reducing stress levels, as well as its signs and symptoms.*

Unfortunately many people take breathing for granted, which is hard to believe seeing as how *without it we would be dead!* Why not learn to do it properly? Having said this, many people have not been taught to do deep diaphragmatic breathing and those of you that have, probably find that under stress you go back to your shallow breaths anyway.

Most people only use about half of their lung capacity, the results being that your lungs get too little oxygen, and of course too much carbon dioxide is left which goes back into our blood. **So practicing our breathing will not only help us to relax, but it will help us to feel healthier as well.**

If you have played golf and noticed your breathing you would have found that you either hold your breath while playing your shots or you have short, shallow rapid breaths from your upper chest.

Neither of these are helping you to play golf consistently, and both situations create even more tension and impair your golf. A good way to feel what conditions you have been putting yourself under, is to raise your shoulders up to your ears and notice what happens to your breathing.

Luckily, with practice, breathing is very easy to control, and learning to take a *deep, slow* and *complete breath* will help with your relaxation process. In your plan I give you the tools to relax *anytime, anywhere*, which will allow you to hit shots without tension ruining your chances of success.

**So what is the next step?**

Learning what questions to ask before every shot to give you the best chance of success for each and every shot you play.
Mental Fundamental #3 - Questions

“We need to realize that most of what we do, day in day out, is ask and answer questions. So if we want to change the quality of our lives, we should change our habitual questions. These questions direct our focus, and therefore how we think and how we feel.”

Anthony Robbins

The questions you ask before any golf shot will largely determine the success or failure of that shot. I bet you wouldn't have a clue what questions you should be asking before a golf shot to ensure the greatest chances of success. **BUT** that's all going to change with what I'm going to teach you.

"He asked intelligent questions."

Quote from Jack Nicklaus's teacher Jack Grout

We each have over 30,000 thoughts a day and all of these thoughts stem from questions, believe it or not? Thinking and evaluating is nothing more than the process of asking and answering questions that we ask ourselves.

As you're reading this literature aren't you asking yourself questions all the time as to the validity of what I'm saying? **You must understand that most of what your brain does is ask and answer questions.**

So to make a **big positive change** in your golf game you have to consciously choose the questions you ask yourself before each and every shot. Because doing this directs your focus towards what you want rather that what you don't want to happen.

Successful players are better not necessarily because of their swings but largely because they ask themselves better questions. And it makes sense that if you ask yourself a good question you are going to come up with a good answer, doesn't it?

"Competitive golf is played mainly on a five-and-a-half inch course: the space between your ears."

Bobby Jones

I hear of golfers all the time who always seem to do what they **DON’T** want to do. And the harder they try the more there results are what they were trying desperately to avoid.

**Does this sound like someone you know, maybe someone you know very well, even yourself??**

As you come up to each and every golf shot you are evaluating the situation and therefore you are constantly asking yourself questions. Here's a typical scenario of what goes on in an **underachieving golfers mind** as they come up to a tee shot…

**Question – Where don’t I want my ball to go?**

**Answer - “To the right, there's out of bounds.” (As this answer comes the golfer visualizes where they don't want the ball to do)**
Question – I don’t want to go to the right but what should I do, especially with my slice, I’m bound to go right?

Answer - “I’ll just have to aim left.”

Question - Is there any trouble on the left?

Answer - “Only trees, but trees are better than out of bounds.”

Question – Should I play safe and use an iron because even the trees look pretty dangerous?

Answer - “Yeah THANKS I’ll just play a safe iron, so I avoid the OB and the trees.”

Now, from these questions there is a thousand different things that could happen but there’s 3 common outcomes that occur 95% of the time and they are....

1. This golfer will stand up on the tee with an iron to play safe and have a picture of what they don’t want to happen firmly placed in their mind. And the conscious mind knows OB fences cause pain in the form of a one shot penalty so while this golfer is swinging the conscious mind is barking orders about how to swing so they’ll avoid the fence.

   In this case the golfers swing will be stiff and they'll hit an ugly slice Out-of-bounds, just as originally planned! Or....

2. This golfer will stand up on the tee with an iron to play safe and have a picture of what they don't want to happen firmly planted in their mind. BUT because they've been in a similar situation before there conscious mind knows that going over the OB fence will cause pain in the form of a one shot penalty.

   So to avoid this pain the conscious mind presents a new improved picture of what it thinks needs to happen to avoid the OB fence and then it gives this to the subconscious mind. So although the golfer ideally wants to be in the fairway they automatically hit the ball to the left to avoid the OB fence. And in the process the golfer ends up in tree trouble on the left-hand side! Or.....

3. Lastly the golfer will stand up on the tee with an iron to play safe and have a picture of what they don't want to happen firmly planted in their mind. BUT once again the conscious mind takes over and controls the swing by barking orders on how to hit the ball in the fairway. Thankfully this time the shot goes down the fairway. But because the swing was controlled by the conscious mind the swing was stiff and the ball was hit badly which means this golfer will face exactly the same trouble on the next shot.

So, Is the trouble the OB or the trees?

Neither, it's the mind!

“Most golfers prepare for disaster. A good golfer prepares for success.”

Bob Toski
Do you recognize yourself in any of these three examples? I'm sure you've done something similar more than a few times, and now you know why – it all started because of the negative question that started the evaluation of a shot!

The rare times golfers play to their potential is largely a result of them unknowingly asking themselves just one good question, and this leads to good answers, and generally a good result.

"A bad attitude is worse than a bad swing."

Payne Stewart

The major problem with the negative questioning on the previous page is that these golfers are asking themselves what they want to avoid, not what they want to happen. The third outcome, although the best result, just means that if they don’t change their questioning on the next shot they'll be fighting themselves again, and on, and on, and on! It has to stop because this process doesn't make golf much fun, does it?

Instead, what if this golfer was to change just the very first question to a positive one? Let’s see what might happen....

Question - Where do I want my ball to finish?

Answer - "I want my ball to finish in the left side of the fairway so I can have a good line into the green."

Question – Should I use a driver or a 3 wood for this shot?

Answer - "A 3-wood would give me more accuracy and good distance and I've been hitting that well, I'll go with that."

Question - How do I have to swing my 3 wood to get the ball to finish at my target? (This automatically encourages your mind to visualize what you want to happen)

Answer - "I have to swing like this (visualize the swing in your mind that will produce the result.)"

Can you see how much more effective this type of questioning is and how the results just have to be better?

Whatever happens I guarantee you'll be a lot closer to what you want to happen than if you use a negative question to start your evaluation of any shot.

Doesn't that make so much sense?

Ask yourself questions about the result you want and you'll get the answers that will easily and effortlessly take you towards your intended target. Of course you won’t always hit your targets, but by using positive questions you'll give yourself a lot more chance to hit your targets.

This method of consciously controlling your questions is critical to your golfing success. Remember “ask and you shall receive.” If you ask a terrible question, you'll get a terrible answer.
Now let's say you hit a bad shot. You're going to be disappointed, that's only natural. You haven't played the shot to the potential you know you're capable of. However, if you remain frustrated after a bad shot and you let it affect the next shot, and even your entire game, you'll never fully enjoy playing golf.

And sure it's great to be out in the fresh air, but it's a lot more fun when you approach each new shot by giving yourself the best possible chance of success. Don't you agree?

"One thing you don't ever do is think of bad things when you're over a ball. People might think about bad shots, but I don't - even on shots I might be scared to hit."

Fred Couples

After a bad shot most golfers ask themselves a question like "why do I hit these awful shots" and because your brain is so powerful, more powerful than any computer, it will come up with an answer even if it has to make one up.

"When you miss a shot, never think of what you did wrong. Come up to the next shot thinking of what you must do right."

Tommy Armour

So your brain might come up with an answer like "because you have a bad swing" or "you don't play enough and that's why you're so inconsistent" or "it's your club's fault, they're useless, you need a new set."

The questions you ask yourself have a huge influence on how you play, and whether or not you play up to your potential. Equally it's also the questions you don't ask yourself that decide how good a golfer you'll become.

A golfer who plays to their potential consistently asks themselves quality questions in all situations on the golf course. You must remember that your brain is like a magic genie and it will give you whatever you ask of it. So make sure you're careful what you ask for, because whatever you ask for, it will gladly give you.

Why do good, positive questions work so well?

Because they instantly change what you're focusing on, which in turn changes how you feel.

Often times on the golf course we let a negative thought come into our head, which has stemmed from a bad, unconscious question that we've asked ourselves. There is a popular view held by many sports psychologists that if you notice a negative thought all you should do is use something called "thought stoppage." Which in brief means you become aware of your negative thoughts and then you say "no" each time a negative thought comes into your head.

"The toughest thing for most people to learn in golf is to accept bad holes - and then forget about them."

Gary Player

If you were to try and do this, and I don't recommend it, you'd find it's hard work. Just waiting for a negative thought to arrive doesn't give you any control. You must be in control of
your mind. You can control it instantly by asking yourself a good positive question, which in turn will lead to good answers, and good answers lead to good results.

**So instead of fighting your negative thoughts use them as a trigger to ask a good question.**

You can change how you feel in a heartbeat just by changing your focus, and you can easily do this with questions. Instead of just getting you "pumped up", the answers to your questions provide you with tangible reasons to feel the emotion you're after.

You might think that affirmations and questions are the same, but that could not be further from the truth. If you repeat an affirmation like "I'm a confident golfer, I'm a confident golfer" you will only feel confident if you create enough emotional intensity, and you change the way you use your body to that of a confident golfer. Then this will change your mental state to one of confidence. But what will really change how you feel is asking, "What is it about my golf game that gives me confidence right now?"

If you keep asking questions like this you'll come up with real experiences and references that will make you begin to focus on the reasons that are real for you. This will change not only your state to one of confidence, but it will change your entire attitude to that of a confident golfer. Doing this will make you feel certain that you're confident, and when you have certainty about anything you then start to believe what it is you want. This creates tremendous power.

"The better I have become, the more I have embarrassed myself by my failures; and the more I have embarrassed myself, the more I have been goaded into trying to develop greater skills."

Jack Nicklaus

Often times a golfer feels frustrated or angry because they focus on things that produce those states. You can hit a bad shot and feel frustrated, and by focusing solely on the outcome you will feel this emotion.

Your mind can only be in a positive or a negative state, there is no in between. And you can choose which state you want to be in by focusing your mind on a positive or negative question, and this automatically leads to either state.

Questions narrow our focus and determine how we act and what we feel. Questions open up places in our brain that allow us to get answers to virtually any question. As you're reading this now you have at your disposal the power to ask yourself a question that will lead to answers that will define the perception of who you are, what you're capable of, and what it will take to achieve your goals and dreams.

Now that you know about consciously controlling the questions you ask yourself you will be able to move towards your dreams quicker than almost any other technique in this entire course. The results you've been getting in your life and on the golf course to date have been determined by the habitual questions you've asked yourself. Remember ask yourself bad questions and you'll receive bad answers.

Now we're going to get into the specifics of exactly what type of questions you should ask yourself before each and every shot, to guarantee you the consistency and enjoyment you deserve.
You've already discovered the process of asking good questions by asking yourself the question \textit{“where do I want my ball to finish?”} before each shot. Now what we're doing is expanding on this so you can choose the best club and strategy to get the closest you possibly can to your selected goal/target on each shot.

I must point out that the type of questions that I'll be giving you will do your golf game no good unless you \textbf{use them consistently}, and that’s the key here. If you try these types of questions just once you will get very little benefit, if any. But if you practice them everyday, as I’ll explain, the benefits will be incredibly positive.

Now one very last thing before we begin. I want to stress that these are the questions I’ve come up with and you are most \textbf{free and welcome to experiment with questions} to find out what works best for you.

Everyone should have a different mental pre-shot routine at the end of this program but what should not change are the fundamentals that I’m giving you. You must incorporate these fundamentals into your pre-shot routine, but how & where you do it is up to you.

We’ll start examining this questioning process by looking at putting first. This is because it’s the easiest place to start because there are fewer questions than any other aspect of the game, as you’ll soon discover…
**Putting Questions**

When you're on the putting green the choice of club is easy and so should the choice in the final target, which of course is the hole. Some people have a view that the longer the putt the bigger the final target should be. But I totally disagree, and here’s why……

If you select a small target (*i.e the hole*) and you miss this target by 3 feet then you’re going to be relatively close to where you want to be. But if you have a 3-foot radius target and you miss that by the same margin (3 feet) then you are going to be 6 feet away from where you really want your ball to finish.

It’s common sense, but often common sense is thrown out the window on the golf course. But trust me, you'll do better in the long term by focusing on small targets than larger ones.

So, following are the questioning steps that I recommend you go through before any putt. Looking at these questions should give you ideas as to the types of questions that you should ask before your putts.

1. Stand behind your ball and ask yourself this question, “Where do I want my ball to finish?” and from this question you’ll come up with your final target.
2. Once you’ve got your final target finalized the next step is to say your goal statement, which is…”My goal for this putt is for my ball to finish in the hole,” and then visualize the ball in the hole.

“I look at my ball when I say “my ball” in the goal statement and then I look at the target when I say “to finish....” which in this case is the hole, and then I visualize the ball there.
3. After this I then ask the following question…“*Where does my ball have to roll to go in the hole?*” and from this question I **visualize** my ball rolling along the line that will carry it into the hole.
4. Then I finally ask...“How do I need to stroke this putt so my ball will roll along this line?”

This then forces my mind to visualize the stroke needed to achieve my goal.

“How do I need to stroke this putt so my ball will roll along this line?”

That’s it and it’s not too hard or complicated is it?

OK, let’s now move onto looking at the type of questions that you should ask for chip shots...
Chipping Questions

Because any shot other than putting requires that you select a club, and you have a number of clubs to choose from, this means the number of questions you need to ask will be more than is needed for putting. But not too many more. Just look at the questions below and you’ll see what I mean.

1. Stand behind your ball and ask yourself this question, “Where do I want my ball to finish?” and from this question you’ll come up with your final target.

“I’ve decided from this question that my final target is the hole.”
2. Once you've got your final target finalized, the next step is to say your goal statement, which is... "My goal for this chip is for my ball to finish in the hole," and then visualize the ball in the hole.

"My goal for this chip is for my ball to finish in the hole.”

I look at my ball when I say “my ball” in the goal statement and then I look at the target when I say “to finish....” which in this case is the hole and then I visualize the ball there.
3. Now I ask “What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll in the hole?” This automatically forces my mind to visualize the ball flying on a good trajectory so it lands **just on the green** (about 6 feet) and then rolls into the hole.

“What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll into the hole?”

After asking this question I then visualize my ball flying and then landing a couple of feet onto the green and rolling into the hole.
4. After seeing this visualization I then ask “What club will allow me to achieve that?” This question allows me to make the best club decision based upon what I’ve just seen and my past experiences in similar situations.

“What club will allow me to achieve that?”

From this question I pick a club that I believe will fly my ball the distance and trajectory I’m after, and also roll the ball the rest of the way to the hole. At this point I go with my gut instinct and make definite decision.
5. Once I’ve chosen the best club from the previous questions I then stand behind my ball and ask...“So with this club what trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll in the hole?” When I say this question I visualize my ball flying along the trajectory I want, landing where I want it to and rolling in the hole.
6. And finally the last question I ask for chipping is…. “How do I need to swing this club so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll in the hole?” When I ask this question I visualize how I need to swing this club to produce the flight and landing position needed for the ball to finish in the hole.

As you can see, from the putting environment to the chipping environment there are more questions to be asked, simply because of the many more options available. OK, let’s now move onto looking at the **type of questions** that you should ask for bunker shots…
Bunker Shot Questions

1. Stand behind your ball and ask yourself this question, “Where do I want my ball to finish?” And from this you’ll come up with your final target.

“I’ve decided from this question that my final target is the hole.”
2. Once you've got your final target finalized the next step is to say your goal statement, which is…”My goal for this bunker shot is for my ball to finish in the hole,” and then I visualize the ball in the hole.
3. Now I ask “What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll in the hole?” This automatically forces my mind to visualize the ball flying on a good trajectory, then landing on the green and rolling into the hole.
4. After seeing this visualization I then ask, “What club will allow me to achieve that?” This question allows me to make the best club decision based upon what I’ve just seen and my past experiences in similar situations.

“What club will allow me to achieve that?”

From this question I am picking a club that I believe will fly my ball the distance and trajectory I’m after, and also roll the ball the rest of the way to the hole. At this point I go with my gut instinct and make definite decision.
5. Once I’ve chosen the best club from the previous questions I then stand behind my ball and ask... “So with this club what trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so that it will roll into the hole?” When I say this question I visualize my ball flying along the trajectory I want, landing where I want it to and rolling in the hole.
6. And finally the last question I ask for a bunker shot is….”How do I need to swing this club so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll in the hole?” When I say this question I visualize how I need to swing this club to produce the flight and landing position needed for the ball to finish in the hole.

“How do I need to swing this club so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll into the hole?”

When I’m asking this question I visualize how I need to swing the club I’m holding so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and then roll in the hole. I visualize the swing first and then the result.

OK, let’s now move onto looking at the type of questions that you should ask for pitch shots…
Pitching Questions

1. Stand behind your ball and ask yourself this question, “Where do I want my ball to finish?” From this question you’ll come up with your final target.

I’ve decided from this question that my final target is the hole.
2. Once you've got your final target finalized the next step is to say your goal statement, which is... "My goal for this pitch shot is for my ball to finish in the hole," and then visualize the ball being in the hole.

“My goal for this pitch shot is for my ball to finish in the hole.”

I look at my ball when I say “my ball” in the goal statement and then I look at the target when I say “to finish...” which in this case is the hole, and then I visualize the ball there.
Depending on the level of golfer you are, you may want to introduce a question for pitch shots that helps you determine how far it is to your target. You’ll have to experiment with this to see if it suits you and your game. And below is an example of the type of question you should ask when you try this…

“How far is it to my target?”

Asking this question helps me to pick the correct club. Plus it also builds up a database of distances in my mind so when I have a similar shot in the future I will have a better idea of what club to use.
3. Now I ask “What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll in the hole?” This automatically forces my mind to visualize the ball flying on a good trajectory, then landing on the green and rolling into the hole.

“What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll into the hole?”

After asking this question I then visualize my ball flying, landing on the green and rolling in the hole.
4. After seeing this visualization I then ask “What club will allow me to achieve that?” This question allows me to make the best club decision based upon what I’ve just seen and my past experiences in similar situations.

“What club will allow me to achieve that?”

From this question I am picking a club that I believe will fly my ball the distance and trajectory I’m after and also roll the ball the rest of the way to the hole. At this point I go with my gut instinct and make a definite decision.
5. Once I’ve chosen the best club from the previous questions I then stand behind my ball and ask... “So with this club what trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll in the hole?” When I ask this question I visualize my ball flying along the trajectory I want to, landing where I want it to and rolling into the hole.
6. And finally the last question I ask for a pitch shot is… “How do I need to swing this club so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll into the hole?” When I say this question I visualize how I need to swing this club to produce the flight and landing position needed for the ball to finish in the hole.

“How do I need to swing this club so my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll into the hole?”

OK, let’s now move onto looking at the type of questions that you should ask for long shots…
Long Game Questions

1. Stand behind your ball and ask yourself this question, “Where do I want my ball to finish?” From this question you’ll come up with your final target.

Note: Although I still want my ball to finish in the hole I cannot see the hole, so my target is the pin.
2. Once you’ve got your final target finalized the next step is to say your goal statement, which is... “My goal for this long shot is for my ball to finish in the hole,” and then visualize the ball in the hole.

Now again like pitch shots, depending on the level of golfer you are you may want to introduce a question that helps you determine how far it is to your target for long shots. You’ll have to experiment with this to see if it suits you and your game, but I will tell you from personal experience that I had much better success using this question with shots that I could realistically reach the pin with.

On drives I found this question too restricting. But again, experiment for yourself and see what works for you. You may find that not asking this question at all produces better results. If so, then do whatever works. Below is an example of the type of question you should ask to see if this works for you...
Asking this question helps me to pick the correct club. Plus it also builds up a database of distances in my mind so when I have a similar shot in the future I will have a better idea what club to use.

“How far is it to my target?”
3. Now I ask “What trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll into the hole?” This automatically forces my mind to visualize the ball flying on a good trajectory, then landing on the green and rolling into the hole.
4. After seeing this visualization I then ask “What club will allow me to achieve that?” This question allows me to make the best club decision based upon what I’ve just seen and my past experiences in similar situations.
5. Once I’ve chosen the best club from the previous questions I then stand behind my ball and ask... “So with this club what trajectory does my ball need to fly on and where does it need to land so it will roll into the hole?” When I ask this question I visualize my ball flying along the trajectory I want, landing where I want it to and rolling into the hole.
6. And finally the last question I ask for a long shot is…. “How do I need to swing this club so that my ball will fly along the trajectory I want, land where I want it to and roll in the hole?” When I say this question I visualize how I need to swing this club to produce the flight and landing position needed for the ball to finish in the hole.

So that’s a summary of the types of questions you should ask before all your golf shots. The next step after you’ve implemented questions into your pre-shot routine is to learn how to concentrate effectively for the short period of time that it takes to swing a golf club.

But we don't want to learn just any old concentration. NO! You need to learn how to achieve relaxed concentration. So, let's begin your interesting journey to the new frontier of relaxed concentration…
Mental Fundamental # 4 - Concentration

"When I'm in this state, everything is pure, vividly clear. I'm in a cocoon of concentration."

Tony Jacklin

So what is “relaxed concentration” and how can you enter that state consistently while playing golf shots?

"Relaxed concentration is a state where you have all your focus/attention on what you are doing to the exclusion of everything else happening around you."

To become totally focused on what you are doing you do not need to force yourself to concentrate. Because if you “try” to concentrate you will fail to ever consistently achieve relaxed concentration and as a result you will never be able to repeat your best ever golf shots.

To consistently repeat relaxed concentration you need to regularly practice concentration exercises. Like any mental skill the more you practice the better and stronger it will become.

You have drifted into a state of relaxed concentration occasionally as is evidenced in your best ever scores or your best ever golf shots. The times when each golf shot was played in a cocoon of concentration as Tony Jacklin talks about in the quote above.

This type of concentration can be learned but before we go any further I want to give you an example of what relaxed concentration is, so you can have it clear in your mind what we are trying to achieve.

You can observe the type of relaxed concentration we are trying to achieve in young babies. If you watch a young baby staring at an object they've never seen before you'll notice they concentrate on it without forcing. They also focus on that one object so well that they ignore everything else and it is very hard to distract them no matter what other noise or commotion is going on around them.

The ability to focus like this is a natural skill but it is one that is generally lost as we grow older. This is where most people think that they have to try and concentrate as if it were something that responds to effort. Concentration is a learned response and as such we have to practice it often for it to become natural again.

"Telling yourself to concentrate and then trying to do it is like telling yourself to speak a foreign language. You can't do either fluently until you learn and practice the skill!"

As golfers we only need to concentrate for relatively short period's of time. As each shot takes roughly about 2 minutes total from the time you arrive at the ball to after you've hit it. You don't need to hold your concentration for long periods of time, like for example the entire round of golf!
There is no point in concentrating between shots as all you'll be doing is wearing yourself out.

The swing itself takes less than 2 seconds and to be totally focused over every short 2 second swing you need to develop an ability to concentrate for longer periods. Like I said, you don't need to be able to hold your concentration for long periods, but by training your mind to concentrate for short periods of say 1-3 minutes you will find it easier to focus over each and every golf shot.

From the time you arrive at your golf ball for your next shot the concentration level required is not overly high during the stage of deciding what club to hit, the wind direction, obstacles etc. But then as you start to get closer to actually hitting the ball this is when your focus needs to narrow and become extremely exclusionary of everything else that is happening.

The following exercises will train and improve your concentration levels so that you can focus 100% on each and every golf shot you play while excluding everything else. And there are concentration exercises on CD #4 that will train you to do this, but feel free to do some of the following concentration exercises in any time you have spare…

**CONCENTRATION EXERCISES**

**Exercise 1:**

These Grid Exercises have been used extensively in the Eastern Bloc countries to test athlete's concentration. Apparently athletes were selected just prior to a competition according to how they did on this task because if an athlete were worried, anxious or distracted by internal thoughts then the scores on this test would be reduced.

If you already have good concentration skills you will find you score in the upper 20’s and into the 30’s of sequential numbers. If you cannot disregard everything but the task at hand you will score much lower than this. So test your concentration now by doing these grid concentration exercises.

**Instructions For Grid Concentration Exercise**

1. Get a stop watch and pen ready.

2. With a pen in hand start your stop watch and start crossing off numbers, starting at 00, 01, 02, 03, 04....and continuing through in numerical sequence until the end of one minute.
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| 09 | 38 | 55 | 22 | 51 | 79 | 45 | 19 | 41 | 30 |    |
| 85 | 58 | 18 | 82 | 37 | 06 | 24 | 57 | 21 | 14 |    |
| 27 | 86 | 05 | 42 | 81 | 61 | 32 | 29 | 46 | 28 |    |
| 59 | 88 | 62 | 84 | 10 | 56 | 80 | 60 | 16 | 12 |    |
| 92 | 13 | 48 | 97 | 73 | 64 | 03 | 49 | 52 | 25 |    |
| 40 | 65 | 91 | 69 | 90 | 44 | 89 | 72 | 66 | 07 |    |
| 93 | 02 | 71 | 23 | 96 | 87 | 83 | 39 | 53 | 54 |    |
| 63 | 98 | 67 | 99 | 68 | 95 | 20 | 70 | 76 | 43 |    |

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| 98 | 01 | 82 | 70 | 07 | 42 | 18 | 53 | 55 | 02 |    |
| 92 | 46 | 21 | 39 | 54 | 30 | 59 | 06 | 29 | 32 |    |
| 62 | 89 | 83 | 73 | 12 | 71 | 50 | 37 | 47 | 11 |    |
| 25 | 90 | 05 | 65 | 56 | 35 | 77 | 20 | 60 | 19 |    |
| 94 | 48 | 67 | 24 | 68 | 00 | 45 | 78 | 38 | 09 |    |
| 43 | 99 | 66 | 86 | 34 | 84 | 72 | 17 | 75 | 44 |    |
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| 16 | 95 | 74 | 27 | 58 | 33 | 15 | 63 | 03 | 28 |    |

Today's Date: _______  Score: _______
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| 11 | 47 | 39 | 60 | 03 | 65 | 53 | 43 | 99 | 52 |
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Today's Date: _________  Score:_______

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These grids can be used several times, especially if you do not score very high. Just start at a number higher than you achieved on your previous attempt e.g. 30 then go as high as you can from there. Then start at say 60 and obviously from there it is going to become a lot easier for you as most of the numbers will be crossed out but it's still great concentration practice.

Once you have improved your concentration to such a level that you score in the 30’s then you can do these exercises with music playing in the background or get someone to try and put you off. If you keep doing this you will learn to block everything out, relax and concentrate fully on the shot at hand regardless of the situation.

Exercise 2:

1. Get a candle and place it on a table about 2 feet in front of you. Do this exercise in a place that you won’t be disturbed.
2. Light the candle, then sit in front of the candle, relax and look at the flame.
3. Fix your eyes on the candle and nothing else, stay calm, relaxed and most importantly breathe naturally as you are looking at the flame.
4. Focus on the flame for about 1 minute.
5. Now close your eyes and look at the image in your mind’s eye. If you can’t see the flame in your mind’s eye, open your eyes and try again.
6. The objective of this exercise is to try and keep the image of the flame for as long as possible. With practice you should be able to keep the image in your mind’s eye for a good couple of minutes.

Exercise 3:

1. Sit quietly in a place where you won’t get disturbed.
2. Close your eyes and focus your attention on a single thought.
3. When you lose the thought, just relax and bring back the thought again.
4. Keep doing this and you will notice you can maintain one thought for longer.

Exercise 4:

1. Sit quietly in a place where you won’t get disturbed.
2. Look around you and focus on something that grabs your interest or you can use a golf ball for this exercise. Really focus on whatever it is that you are looking at.
3. If you lose focus, just take a deep breath and bring the object back into focus.

Exercise 5:

1. Sit or lie quietly in a place where you won’t get disturbed.
2. Focus on a noise you can hear, like the birds, insects or kids playing etc.
3. Whatever sound you pick initially focus on it for a while then let it drift away and focus on another sound.
Exercise 6:

1. Get three bottles and place them on a table in front of you. Place them so you can see all three bottles.
2. Look at all three bottles then begin to narrow your focus until you are aware of only one target *(the middle bottle to start with)*, then shift your focus to the centre of that bottle.
3. Continue with this exercise until you get so immersed in the bottle that everything else is blocked out. If done properly you will not hear any noise or get distracted.

Now that you know how to set goals for each shot, you've learned about the importance of relaxation, you know what type of questions to ask before each shot, and you've discovered relaxed concentration, the next logical step is to improve your visualization skills to levels of a Jack Nicklaus. Because what you see you generally get, and you want to be the best you possibly can be, don't you?

So let's start to **transform your golf game** by learning how to **control your visualization**, which will enable you to use this powerful tool to **preordain your golfing success**...
Mental Fundamental #5 - Visualization

"I never hit a shot, not even in practice, without having a very sharp, in-focus picture of it in my head. Its like a color movie."

Jack Nicklaus

Jack Nicklaus arguably the greatest golfer of all time believes that rehearsing shots in his mind before actually swinging is critical to his success. Jack has been quoted as saying that hitting a shot to a certain place is 10% swing, 40% stance and setup and 50% the mental picture of how the swing should occur.

Jack also fully explains how he goes about producing his mental picture before each shot. Here's what he says....

"First I see the ball where I want it to finish in a specific small area on the fairway or green. Next I see the ball going there - it's path, trajectory, and behavior on landing. Finally I see myself making the kind of swing that will turn the first two images into reality. These "home movies" are a key to my concentration and to my positive approach to every shot."

Tiger Woods who's goal is to beat Jack Nicklaus's major championship record (18 Major Titles) started using visualization before each shot at a very early age. For example Tiger's father asked him what he was thinking on the first tee of his first international amateur tournament. Tiger was only a second-grader and his reply was simple "where I wanted the ball to go, Daddy." And the ball did indeed go where Tiger wanted because of his positive approach combined with a visual image.

How often have you done exactly the opposite of what Tiger did? That is to think to yourself where you don't want the ball to go? Doing this is just programming your mind for failure.

Lets "imagine" you're standing on a tee with trouble on the right and you say to yourself "whatever you do, don't go right", and as you're saying this to yourself you're looking at the trouble on the right. Automatically you would be drawing a picture of the ball curving into this trouble.

This picture has then been programmed into your mind and unless you have learnt a lot of good mental techniques you'll still have this picture in your head over the ball, no matter how hard you try to stop it. With a bad mental image in your head like this you really only have two outcomes....

1. You'll do exactly what you don't want to do, or
2. You'll try so hard to override this image that you'll steer the ball the opposite way avoiding the trouble on the right and in the process probably getting into trouble on the left!

Neither of these options makes golf much fun but now you've got a solution, you can learn visualization and learn to imagine what you want to happen, just like Tiger Woods!
Another famous golfer Bob Tway has said that a consistent swing is the result of turning all of your mechanical thoughts into a feeling, which is done through repeatedly imagining the perfect golf swing.

"One of the qualities that separates guys like Seve Ballesteros and Lee Trevino from the rest of the world is an intangible - imagination."

Greg Norman

Even after all of these golfing great's have extolled the virtues of visualization and the story about trying to avoid the trouble sounded a bit too close to home, maybe you're still a bit skeptical about this visualization thing. Well if you are and even if you're not here's a great couple of exercises to demonstrate the power of your mind to influence your bodily actions.

Visualization Experiment 1:

1. Get a piece of string approximately 15-20 cm long.
2. Now tie a heavy bolt or sinker onto the end of the string.
3. Place your elbow onto a table top and hold the string between the thumb and forefinger with the weight suspended directly below your hand.
4. Now focus on the weight, and visualize in your mind’s eye the weight swinging like a pendulum on a clock. You can do this with your eyes open or closed, it’s up to you.
5. Once you have the weight physically moving like a pendulum, change the image so the weight swings directly away from you and then towards you.
6. Once the weight is swinging away from you and towards you, imagine the weight moving in a clockwise direction. Once the weight moves in that direction visualize it moving in an anti-clockwise direction.

Isn't it amazing at how just by visualizing the movement made the pendulum physically move, so how did this happen?

Well, while visualizing the pendulum moving, your brain converted this image into signals and then sent these signals to your hands as to what you wanted the pendulum to do. These signals produced tiny, little movements in your hands and fingers that moved the pendulum according to what you were visualizing.

The movements produced from visualization are practically unnoticeable to the naked eye BUT if you tried to consciously (i.e. verbalize to yourself what to do with your hands and fingers so the pendulum moves) move the pendulum your movements would become noticeable. This means that if you vividly imagine anything your brain automatically sends signals to your body as to what actions it needs to take to produce the imagined image.

So if you vividly imagine yourself swinging a golf club perfectly your brain will automatically be sending signals to your body as to how you can produce that swing. Like any habit, if you practice it and repeat what you want to do, then the result will become automatic. This is called building a neural pathway.

"You need a highly disciplined imagination to play good golf. Give your imagination free rein when in a position to win and it can be the death of you, especially if you let it wander in the future. Yet fail to use your imagination constructively in planning each shot and you will rarely if ever be in a position to win."

Jack Nicklaus
Any habit that you have is the result of a neural pathway that has been ingrained. If you've tried to stop any habit you know how hard it is and you'd also know that to do so involved a lot of conscious effort, which is hard work!

Some people I've met say "I don't visualize," and if you're one of them don't even bother trying to improve because you're wasting your time. No, I'm only kidding, anything that you can do with pictures in your mind you can also do by talking to yourself or getting feelings. I just want you to know that everyone visualizes, it's impossible not to.

Most people think that when they visualize the image has to be crystal clear, just like a movie. For most people it's not like that, and as a result they wrongly think they can't visualize.

After learning and improving your visualization you'll be able to change any habit, (whether it be a golfing one or another habit) just by repeatedly visualizing what you want to happen instead of the opposite. Doing this will send the same signals to your brain as those sent when you actually do the new action and this will groove a new neural pathway.

Your brain has so much potential and most of it is untapped. Through learning visualization we are going to pull out the plug so you fully realize what you're truly capable of! Now please do this next visualization experiment to see just a fraction of the potential your mind has to offer.

**You'll need a partner of similar height and strength to you.** If you don't have a partner that fits the bill, do it later when you do have someone who can help you, I'm sure they'll also find it an interesting and fun exercise.

**Visualization Experiment 2:**

1. Face your partner directly.
2. One of you needs to extend their dominant arm straight out, palm up, so the back of the wrist is resting on the partner's opposite shoulder.
3. The other partner then cups both of their hands above the bend in the partner's elbow.
4. Now the person with the extended arm, try's to tighten it to the maximum to get it as strong as possible.
5. When the person's arm is as strong as possible, the other partner tests it for its strength by pushing down on the bend to see how strong it actually is.
6. Now the partners swap over and perform this exercise again.
7. Go back to how you started, but this time the person with the extended arm is to shut everything out of their mind and to visualize their arm as a thick steel bar that extends out through the wall that they are facing. As soon as the extended arm person has visualized their arm as the un-bendable steel bar, then they must tell the partner so they can now test the arm for strength again.
8. Now switch roles once again.

Wasn't it amazing at how much stronger your arm was when you visualized it as a steel bar?

Have you ever said to yourself "I'll believe it when I see it," if you haven't said it to yourself, I bet you've heard it. Isn't it true that what we see effects what we believe? By doing the previous exercise you've just proven to yourself that visualizing a steel bar made you
believe that your arm was as strong as a steel and this belief transformed your arm into a much stronger proposition than by you "trying" to make your arm strong!

Another important distinction I hope you've learnt from these two experiments is that "trying" fails. If you use your mind well then you won't need to "try" but your actions (programming your mind for success) will drive you in the direction you want to go without conscious, hard effort.

If you've watched yourself hole crucial short putts to win matches then you're much, much more likely to believe that you're a great short putter under pressure than if you've watched yourself miss short putt after short putt in pressure situations.

**Seeing is truly believing, isn't it?**

Have you ever been taught how to visualize? If you answer no, and the chances are pretty good that you did, then I'm going to teach you how to visualize and how to use this powerful tool to dramatically improve the consistency and enjoyment in your golf game. If you have learnt how to visualize then here's your opportunity to improve this skill even more, because you can never, ever become too good at visualization.

"I am not an especially introspective individual, yet by training, I have developed a very lively imagination when it comes to selecting golf shots. I can 'see' all my options in my mind's eye during the process of choosing a shot. Once the choice is made, I then try to visualize the flight of the ball to the target even more vividly before I step up to it (a picture that won't focus sharply is usually a warning to back off and reconsider). Next, I try with equal intensity to visualize the swing I need to make to execute the shot I have pictured. Only after these three mental exercises do I step up to the ball."

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Jack Nicklaus

The great thing about visualization is that we can control and imagine anything over and over in our minds and this will create either a positive or negative belief for us. Obviously we don't want to create negative beliefs, but that has probably already happened if you haven't learnt to control your visualization.

But don't worry, because now you're going to learn to control your visualization so you can program yourself for any positive belief you want, and not only your golf game. You are the only one who has control of your mind so take control today by choosing to!

The term visualization is really not a full description on what good visualization is all about. To get the most out of visualization you need to involve all of your senses when you are creating or re-creating anything in your mind. The images you make should include all of the following elements:

- **Auditory** - e.g. the sound of a ball being hit.
- **Olfactory** - e.g. the smell of the freshly mown grass.
- **Tactile** - e.g. the feel of the grip as you're swinging the club.
- **Gustatory** - e.g. the taste of the meal that you had before playing golf
- **Kinesthetic** - e.g. the motion of your body as you swing a club.

Visualization (using all of the elements above) is a mental tool that allows you to program your body to perform how you want it to -- automatically! If you do the exercises I give you (on CD #4) then you'll learn to use the part of your brain that controls visualization
This will help you to take your golf game to a new much more enjoyable level.

How much more confidence do you think you'd have playing golf if you honestly believed that you were a great putter and you had the visual references to back this belief up?

What would happen to your confidence levels if you saw yourself swinging with a pure fluid motion over and over again and you were forced to “believe” that you had a great golf swing?

Do you think that you’d improve your game if you repeatedly watched yourself up-and-down it from anywhere inside 100 yards just like a top pro would? If from these questions and the experiments you’ve done you now believe that visualization will help improve your positive beliefs, confidence and technique then you absolutely must consistently practice and use the exercises on the CD’s supplied.

If you follow the instructions and you practice visualization everyday then you can improve your visualization skills to the level of a Jack Nicklaus or Tiger Woods. It's possible to get to the same mental level as either one of these great golfers but you can only get to there mental level through consistent, persistent mental practice.

Now if you started playing golf as a youngster you would’ve learned to play golf through watching, learning and imitating. And this is the best way to learn any physical skill.

When children learn to walk they obviously watch their parents and others walking and then imitate. Of course they fall down but then that’s how they learn, by making mistakes getting back up and giving it another go. Eventually they can keep their balance and after much practice and falling down they then walk without any conscious effort.

It's natural for children to learn by imitating and they do this because they take a mental picture (i.e. visualize) of the action they want to perform and then copy the image in there mind.

I’m sure you’ve seen a golfers swing and thought "hey that looks good I'll try and copy it". The difference with doing this copying, as an adult as opposed to a child is that a child looks at a good golfers swing and subconsciously copies it. An adult golfer looks at a good golfers swing and try's to consciously copy it. And believe me the difference is huge in both application and results!

So what's the difference between subconscious copying and conscious copying?

Well, a child will see a swing and copy it without using words to verbalize the actions instead they use feelings i.e. how it would feel to swing like that person and doing this creates the image that they copy.

An adult watches a swing and then verbalizes all the movements that make up that one continuous action. For example an adult might say "he keeps his head still, he begins his take-away slowly with full extension and he turns his shoulders past 90 degrees on his backswing, and on and on....".
After this analysis the adult will try to **consciously** copy these movements and the result will look nothing like the other persons swing. Their once natural swing will be **stiff, mechanical and unnatural.**

Children swing freely and fluently by using feelings. This means they swing without any technical thoughts going through there head, as opposed to most adults who swing with a barrage of do's and don'ts!! **In other words children use their subconscious mind to swing the club and most adults use there conscious mind to move the club.**

Once you've learnt how to visualize well and you combine this with the exercise I give you in Secret #7 you will be able to reach your subconscious mind with images that you want to program, and this will change your physical results very quickly. The best thing about the subconscious mind is that it cannot tell between reality and something, which has been created or made up.

Children, who have amazing visualization capabilities, are quickly taught to ignore the right hemisphere of their brain by the school system. This forces children to use the brains left hemisphere, which is much better at analyzing and looking at things from a logical perspective.

Luckily for us golfers and people in general the right hemisphere, our visualization command center responds extremely well too regular daily exercise. Visualization will not do your golf game much good at all if you do not use it regularly.

Visualization allows you to **see and believe** that you can repeat your great shots over and over again and once your mind has been subjected to your perfect shots repeatedly it will then be automatically programmed into repeating what you have already done.

In effect you will be programming your mind to send the **same signals that have produced your best ever shots** and by repeatedly visualizing your great shots you will be building up a neural pathway that makes these shots a habit! But like any habit you have acquired it takes **time and persistence** to ingrain it. That is why you must practice visualization **consistently.**

Any sacrifice (**for example time spent learning to visualize**) is surely a good investment when you consider all the great advantages that are gained by becoming a master visualizer! Here's just some of the advantages of improving this skill...

- **To do visualization you do not need a golf club or golf course and you can in effect practice anytime, anywhere.** For example you can be lying on a couch and close your eyes and imagine yourself hitting a perfect drive on a long par 4 and this will send the same signals to your muscles as if you physically hit the shot!
- By vividly practicing your golf game you can **build up your golfing muscle memory** without having to physically hit golf balls!
- Once you have a good grasp of the fundamental moves of the golf swing needed to consistently hit good golf shots then you can practice perfectly by **repeatedly visualizing your perfect swing.** This allows you to control how you want to swing on every practice shot so that you hit each shot perfectly whereas most golfers physically practice only strengthening bad neural pathways (**i.e. grooving bad habits**).
- When you continuously repeat the perfect golf swing for you, over and over in your head, in effect you are, **building a golfing machine.** You are programming your mind to send the appropriate signals to the muscles in your body to swing as you've visualized, and this will make your swing both **automatic and natural.** In effect you are
programming your mind to swing perfectly and this program sends signals to your muscles to follow the plan that you have chosen.

"If you consistently repeat your perfect swing over and over again in your mind you are programming yourself for golfing success!"

Before you start using visualization you must have a clear image in your mind of how you want to swing, because if you visualize a bad swing you'll be strengthening the wrong neural pathways. The more vivid and lifelike you can make an image by incorporating all of senses (e.g. smell, taste, feel etc.) into your visualization, the faster your visualization practices will be converted to your bodily actions.

Visualization can be used in the following ways to improve your golf game:

♦ Visualization before every golf shot
♦ Practicing your golf game with visualization
♦ Postgame visualization reviews
♦ Pregame visualization
♦ Improving/Learning new golf shots
♦ Playing strategy
♦ Fixing physical faults

You must realize that if you repeat a vividly imagined image it will eventually become a reality. So if you repeat (with images) to yourself that you miss short putts, then you will. If you repeat the image of yourself as a bad chipper, then you will always remain one, until you change that image and consistently repeat the new image you want to program.

"You must always be positive, because your body can only do what our brain sees."

Chi Chi Rodriguez

Whatever bad habits you have in your golf game you can change them with visualization combined with relaxation. Also when you learn how to do this you can use time distortion which means you can visualize a shot hundreds of times in short periods of time. Imagine working on your short putting by attempting to hole say 200 three foot putts.

Now if you were to physically do this it would take you a long time not to mention the sore back picking up the balls, but with visualization combined with relaxation you could putt 200 balls PERFECTLY in under 5 minutes!

Now over the next few pages are some exercises that will help you to improve your control of images so you can make them as vivid and lifelike as possible. The more lifelike you can visualize the quicker your golf game will improve.

As with any physical/mental ability everyone differs when it comes to vividly imagining things, but visualization is a skill that can be easily improved with regular, consistent practice, and in the plan I give you the tools to do this. But there are certain areas that we want to practice when we do any imagery exercises, they are:
• Vividness
• Controllability
• Using all the senses i.e. smell, taste, feel of the club, hearing etc.

Visualization Exercise Pointers

1. You should relax fully before doing any visualization practice. It has been proven that visualization combined with relaxation is more effective than visualization by itself. So before you do any visualization use one of the relaxation techniques from the Relaxation Workshop to relax fully.

2. You should experiment with visualizing from an external point of view and an internal point of view (e.g. external - watching yourself as if through a video camera, internal - looking through your eyes at the ball).

3. Like relaxation you should practice visualization in a quiet, comfortable environment that is free from excessive noise and distractions. When you can visualize easily you will be able to do it anywhere just like relaxation.

The following visualization exercises are either on the audio CD's or they're extra.

**VISUALIZATION EXERCISES**

**Exercise 1:**

1. Simply focus on a small part of something much larger for example the club face of one of your golf clubs.
2. Focus on that, then close your eyes and pretend you see it in your mind, now open your eyes and look at the club face, then close your eyes and pretend you see it, then open, look then close your eyes.
3. Keep doing this so fast that your brain doesn't know when it's actually seeing it and when you're making it up.
4. Once you can do that easily then move to the clubhead and the hosel, then the clubhead, hosel and shaft, then the entire golf cub.

   **Note:** If you practiced this for 5 minutes a day for 15 days you won't believe how good you'll become at visualizing. It's like any other muscle, it needs to be developed. And that's how you do it through use and practice.

**Exercise 2:**

1. Sit at table and place a single object on it (e.g. a cup, a jug or glass)
2. Spend the next couple of minutes studying the object. Study it as if you have never seen it before.
3. Once you feel really familiar with the object, close your eyes and visualize the object. If you find it difficult to visualize the object, open your eyes and have another look, then try again.
4. Continue with this exercise until you are happy that you can do it.
Exercise 3:

1. Choose a person that you are around quite often i.e. your wife/husband or partner.
2. Now close your eyes and visualize that person sitting in a chair right in front of you.
3. Try to see that person in as much detail and as vividly as possible.
4. Now visualize that person talking to you, and try to hear their voice.
5. Clearly visualize all of the persons facial expressions as they talk.
6. While you are visualizing this person, see if you can recreate the feelings you have towards them e.g. love, respect etc.

Exercise 4:

1. Where you normally do your visualization look around at what you can see.
2. Study everything in the room, once again as if you have never seen it before. Take good notice of the colors and textures of the objects in the room. Also think about how this room makes you feel.
3. Now once you have a good picture of how the room looks and feels, close your eyes and picture it in as much detail as you can. Try to visualize the appearance and texture of the objects in the room and also bring in the feelings the room gives to you.

Exercise 5:

1. Visualize yourself on the practice green of your home club.
2. No one else is there except you, stand in the middle of the practice green and look all around you. Listen to the emptiness. Look for as many details as you can.
3. Now visualize yourself in the same setting, but this time there are a lot of people around getting ready to tee off, practicing their putting etc.
4. Look all around and notice the sights, sounds, smells and then bring in the feelings you get from getting ready to tee off.

Exercise 6:

1. Sit by a window at home and look outside. Notice everything that is still and notice the things that move.
2. Now close your eyes and visualize the outside of your home.
3. Once you have done this successfully with nothing really changing incorporate moving objects into your visualization. For example, birds, people walking down the road etc. You can even change the day from a sunny one to rainy and vice versa. Use your imagination and visualize as vividly as possible.

Exercise 7:

1. Get out your putter and look at it very closely, as though you have never seen it before.
2. Now close your eyes and visualize your putter, and feel yourself holding it.
3. Now visualize yourself on your home course putting green with your putter and some balls.
4. Clearly visualize yourself putting in 3 footers repeatedly. Hole them over and over again.
5. Now try to hear the sounds involved in putting i.e. your body moving, the sound as the ball comes off the putter face and also the ball going into the hole. Listen to all of the sounds that happen when you putt.
6. Lastly place the sound and the picture clearly together so you get the full sensations of putting. Make sure you feel how you are putting. Also experiment watching yourself putt from an internal point (i.e. through your own eyes) and from an external point of view (i.e. through a camera down the line of the ball and face on).

**Exercise 8:**

1. In exercise 4 you had to look around the room you normally do your visualization and relaxation in, and then you had to visualize it. Now I want you to sit in this same room but this time I want you to visualize another room of your house. How big is it? What atmosphere does it have?
2. Take your time to visualize all the different aspects of this room. Feel the different surfaces e.g. cushions and floors.
3. Now become aware of the feelings that this room brings up for you.
4. Once you have vividly visualized the room go and have a look at it yourself to see if you captured the atmosphere and objects accurately.

**Exercise 9:**

1. Visualize yourself putting by yourself on the practice green. Just putting from hole to hole.
2. Now visualize one of your friends coming along and challenging you to a friendly competition.
3. Visualize yourself putting as well as you can against your friend. Feel everything that is involved in putting well. Make up a conversation with your friend, smell the air, feel the ball come off the putter, and see your friends face when the ball goes in the hole. See him buy you a drink or whatever, and feel the emotion that this brings up for you.

**Exercise 10:**

1. Choose a part of your golf game that you are having trouble with.
2. Recreate the times when you have messed up a particular shot.
3. Notice what you are doing wrong.
4. Now visualize yourself performing the golf shot successfully.
5. Bring up all the emotions and feelings you can in performing this shot successfully.

*Note: You can slow your swing down in slow motion to detect faults. Then you can also correct them in slow motion.*

**Exercise 11:**

1. Visualize an object like a mug or jug. Simply design one in your mind.
2. See it clearly in your mind.
3. Feel it. Is it rough or smooth? Is it light or heavy? What color is it? Do you like it? If not change it so you do.

**Exercise 12:**

1. Now you are going to create your dream room. So visualize a room.
2. The room you visualize can have anything in it you want, it can be as large as you like. Just go around the room and put things there that you would like. For example, a spa
pool with a huge TV next to it linked up to a stereo, and on the TV is the last round of the masters!
3. You can do anything you want, make up anything you want, and it's all free!

**Exercise 13:**

1. This time you can create an imaginary scene in your mind.
2. You can go anywhere in the world you like. Pick the scenery that most appeals to you. Choose the weather that you like. Be among the people that you want to be with.
3. The choice is yours, let your imagination run wild, and feel everything. The taste, the smell, the sounds, the feelings. Make it as real as possible and afterwards you will feel great.

**Exercise 14:**

1. Think back to a golf round in which you played extremely well.
2. Use all of your senses to recreate this event in your mind.
3. See yourself playing the great shots, hear all the sounds involved, feel your body as you played your shots and experience again the emotions that were involved. How do you feel on the golf course?
4. A great feeling wasn’t it? You will have this feeling again and again now that you have learnt to visualize properly.

This last exercise is a very important exercise because it gives you the feelings that were involved when you played golf to your potential. When you played your best golf shots, and when you had your best ever rounds of golf you were playing with your powerful subconscious mind.

Learning to visualize is the start of using this part of your mind to **play your best consistently** but it is only the start so lets continue with this new exciting journey of programming your mind to automatically perform to your potential.....
Mental Fundamental #6 - Triggers

"I think he has more belief in himself, more supreme confidence, than any golfer ever. He thinks he deserves to win and that he's destined to win. So he does win. It's written all over him."  
Ben Crenshaw - on Jack Nicklaus

The technique in this chapter will help you to take your game to a new and much more enjoyable level but only if you use the information in here on a consistent basis. If you do the exercises I reveal here and in the plan then you'll achieve greater consistency and more enjoyment simply by creating triggers that automatically and consistently get you back into the same state of mind as you were in when you hit your greatest ever golf shots.

You've probably heard about triggers before, BUT this way of doing them is like nothing you've ever seen before and many, many times more effective than the traditional form of triggers.

Sam Snead has used the word “oily” to describe his swing and other golfers like Gary Player use a physical trigger which in his case is to kick the right knee to start the backswing. Or there’s the famous lady golfer who kept the word ooooom-PAH written on her driver to program the image of an easy slow backswing and a vigorous downswing.

Bob Tway uses simple verbal triggers such as steady head, balance and rhythm, to help him visualize the swing before he hits a shot. Many other golfers use cue words like straight back and through for putting or make a full turn for full shots.

All though these so called “triggers” and cue words might work for a bit they are never going to consistently get you back into the state of mind that you had when you hit your best ever golf shots.

Why?

Simply because no one has ever fully explained to you how you can use words and actions to trigger back the same mindset you had at any particular time.

When a golfer hits a great golf shot his natural tendency is to “try” and repeat that shot, but when most golfers “try” to repeat a shot, they “try” to do it mechanically, by dissecting every little movement in the golf swing and then trying to consciously copy that. I don't have to tell you that the result from this conscious attempt to copy success is far from close to what you've proven you're capable of.

This conscious attempt to copy the swing is absurd when you think about it, and I'm not pointing fingers because I did exactly that myself for years. I did not know any other way and as adults our conscious mind loves to analyze and break everything down, which only ruins everyone's golf game that does it.
You see, to try and reproduce anything *mechanically* is going to get you further away from what you're trying to accomplish. The trick is to get back into the state of mind that you had when you hit the perfect shot or felt confident, motivated or whatever.

We can trigger these *feelings/states* of mind anytime we want. You use triggers all the time and its happening when you least expect it. So it’s not a matter of me showing you how to do it, but making you aware of it, so you can then control it to improve any area of your golf game or life.

An example of a trigger is hearing some music which triggers you to feel great. **So how do triggers occur?** Well, anytime you're in an intense emotional state anything that happens consistently while you're in that state gets associated to that state instantly in your nervous system.

So, I'll give you an example of how a trigger is formed.

Let's say a person is playing in a major golf championship, say the *Masters*. He's coming down the last hole of the tournament in a great position to win but ends up blowing it. **He choked in other words.**

Obviously that person is not going to be feeling terribly good afterwards especially as it was their lifelong dream to win the *Masters*. So they're going to be in a very high emotional state - *say depression*. 

Now when that happens anything that happens consistently and lets be more specific, anything that happens to this person when they are in this peak emotion called depression, anything that happens and is *unique* and *specific* and happens consistently while they're in this state will get linked.

So what if a well meaning person comes up to this golfer while they're feeling depressed and slaps them on the back and says **"hey Greg I know you feel bad, but you'll be OK."** And the next person says **"yeah Greg you'll be OK"** and slaps them on the back in the same place a couple of times. And it doesn't change Greg's state or emotion, so he continues to stay depressed when this consistent slap occurs.

**So what's happened here?**

Well a negative trigger has been installed. In other words a year might've gone by and Greg's playing in the *Masters* again and after the third round he's leading by a bunch of shots, seemingly in a no lose situation. Also he feels **"OK"** about losing last year's *Masters*, he's learned from the situation, and he is a stronger and better golfer and person.

Then just before the 4th round someone comes along and says **"hey good luck today Greg"** and they slap him on the back in the exact same place and way that happened a year ago. This recreates the trigger, and within 5-10 seconds what does Greg feel? **Depression** and worst of all he doesn't even know why. Of course you can imagine what happened to Greg in the final round!

Has that ever happened to you, have you all of a sudden felt depressed and not even known why? I'll tell you why, because a trigger got fired off. You might say **"but, nobody touched me."** Well are touches the only form of triggers you can have?
No, you can have auditory triggers, you can walk into a room and hear some music that's playing *quietly in the background* that you're hardly even aware of and it reminds you of a sad time and you get depressed. Or a certain smell could be a trigger for you. Have you ever smelled a meal that reminds you of the meals your family used to have and "*Wham*" you're right back there again.

So there are all kinds of triggers and they're happening around you all the time. And again I am saying this because I really want to stress this - anytime you or anyone around you is in an intense state and what I mean by that is that their *body is involved* and they're in a really *focused strong emotional state*. Anytime anyone is in a strong state like that anything that happens that is unique and happens consistently while they're in this state will get linked up.

So if you want to take control, instead of your environment controlling you, then you can create your own triggers and you can do it in 2 easy steps...

1. First put yourself in an emotional state that you want to trigger in. In other words if you want to get a trigger that makes you feel confident, all you have to do is think of a time when you were extremely confident and really get there. And what do I mean by get there? I mean breathe the way you did when you were confident and *use gestures as if you are unstoppable, smile, use your body with confidence*, and get yourself in the peak of confidence. Then when you are right at the peak of the state you want then go to step two, which is to...

2. Consistently do something unique. And link it to that emotion. So, you could be in this total state of lets say "*confidence*" and you could click your fingers and say *"yes,"* click your fingers and say *"yes."* Click your fingers and say *"yes"* and if you do this over and over again and make the emotion stronger and stronger, then just by doing that repeatedly with deep emotion and *that's the key* you've got to really have strong emotions. You've got to do it as if you feel it throughout your whole entire body. And if you do it over and over again, you will condition your emotions and mind in your nervous system to link "*yes*" and clicking your fingers to feeling absolute confidence. *Does that make sense?* So all you have to do is set that up.

Remember, how we behave is based on the state we're in. If you want to become a more consistent golfer you need to trigger a better state of mind that supports you. As I've already said the problem with most golfers when they try to recreate their perfect shots is they try to remember how they did it mechanically.

Let me ask you a question. *Have you ever hit a golf ball perfectly?* Have you done that more than once? Of course. Well you don't need to think about how to hit a golf ball perfectly, you already know how. Your *subconscious mind* knows the rituals that you need to go through to hit a golf ball perfectly. All you have to do is put yourself in that same state of mind and emotion where that happens automatically.

You can trigger yourself to anything.

Now here's my challenge to you, create some triggers for yourself so you can go from *frustrated to motivated* in a heart beat. Or go from *angry to relaxed*. Can you see the huge value in this? And all you have to do is think of a time in your life when you've been totally motivated, relaxed or whatever and create a trigger.
Maybe your trigger is tugging your ear and saying “tranquillity.” I want you to have buttons to your own brain, you should be in charge of your emotions (not the outside world).

So that's how you create triggers in two easy steps. **Get yourself in the state you want and at the peak, consistently do something over and over again and just do it until its conditioned.** And if you want to become really good at this, then you must practice your triggers until they are habits. The more you use it the better your new trigger will become.

If you're thinking, how long will the trigger last? Well that depends on how **intense the emotional state** was when you did the trigger in the first place. If you are in a state of total confidence and motivation and you trigger that, that's going to be more powerful than if you go "yeah I'm pretty confident and motivated." (Slowly without emotion)

In other words if the state is not really intense, the trigger probably won't last a very long time. **Does that make sense?** Secondly, if a trigger is going to last you need to link it to something unique. For example, a unique touch and/or a unique sound. So lets review....

**What is most important when developing a trigger?**

1. The intensity of the state that the person is in. In other words if you want a strong trigger make sure when you go to trigger yourself that you really feel strongly about what you're linking in. So if you want to trigger something like confidence you have to really be in a confident state, not a partially confident state. And obviously the best way to get back to the shot or situation that you want to recreate so you can trigger it, is by using visualization.

2. You have to make sure **YOU** create the trigger. That is the touch or voice tone at the peak of the emotion. You might say you don't know when your peak is, but just trust your subconscious and practice, and you'll get good at this. And remember the touch must be unique. Don't just touch your nose or clap your hands. Do something unique like tugging your ear.

**First Exercise To Trigger Confidence!**

So here's the first exercise and remember you can do this with any emotion, but we're going to trigger the emotion of confidence right now. So **step-by-step** here's what to do so you can feel confident in a heartbeat, wherever and whenever you want.

First, remember a time when you felt really confident and this can be a time on the golf course or somewhere else. I'll give you a moment now to remember a time when you're confident was super high....

Ok, now write down in the space below the time you're linking back to and the feeling of confidence this gave you. Write down where and when this moment was and how you felt, how you were moving, what your body positions were etc. Write these feelings and thoughts down right now....
Great, you're doing perfectly.

Now I want you to visualize, and remember this time in your life when you felt super confident and really get back there......remember how you felt......did you feel unstoppable?......remember how you were moving your body....really feel the confidence through your body and act as though this confidence is back. Move your body as if you're confidence is huge and gesture as if you're unstoppable and keep building up this confident emotion so you're bursting with confidence, so you're unstoppable and then at the peak of this emotion do something to link to this feeling. For example, you might click your fingers and say "yes."

Keep building up your confident state and click your fingers and say "yes", build up your confidence even more and click your fingers and say "yes", build even more and click your fingers "yes", and again "yes", increase your confidence even more and click your fingers and say "yes".

Great, you're doing fantastic. You're on a roll and you have just built up an automatic response in your nervous system so that when you click your fingers and say "yes" you feel absolute confidence. What a feeling and what control you now have over your emotions. Now you can choose what states or emotions you want to be in because you can do this with any feeling you want.

What power!

This is a huge gift you've just received because a lot of people are on an emotional roller-coaster depending on what is happening in the outside world. But no one can rain on your parade any more, you can feel however you want to feel at a snap of the fingers. Now that's control and ultimate power!

So, now you have a trigger for confidence you should practice it all the time. If you're walking somewhere then use your trigger to feel confident. Snap your fingers and say "yes" or use whatever trigger you decided upon.

Second Exercise To Trigger Relaxation!

Imagine being able to relax anywhere, anytime by using a trigger. It's possible and I'm going to show you how. This following exercise uses a simple breathing technique that will relax you and then we're going to create the trigger so you can reproduce that relaxed feeling anytime, anywhere. So follow along with the steps below.

First get yourself into a comfortable sitting position and do the following.

1. Place your thumb on your right nostril and pinch it closed. Now gently inhale through your left nostril for a count of 5, and count 1 elephant, 2 elephant, 3 elephant, 4 elephant and 5 elephant, so you don't rush it.
2. Now **pinch both nostrils closed** and **hold your breath for 5 seconds** and use the elephant counting.

3. Ok, now take your finger off your right nostril so you **can breathe through that nostril for 5 elephant breathes**.

4. Hold your breath for 5 elephant breathes and then repeat this exercise for 5 minutes. At the end of 5 minutes when you are feeling totally relaxed then you should create a physical trigger. **For example;** gently tug on one of your ear lobes, or gently grab the skin between your thumb and forefinger. These are just examples, you must choose something that is unique for you. And when you have your physical trigger and you’re relaxed while doing it you should also repeat this statement “**I feel relaxed and peaceful.**”

Doing this consistently **i.e over a period of days**, will condition the response of relaxation to the physical and verbal triggers. All you need to do is practice this exercise and keep doing your triggers and you’ll have a powerful asset that you can use on the golf course anytime to relax. **Won't that be great??**

So here’s a summary of what you should do to trigger relaxation:

- **Perform the relaxation nostril breathing exercise** above until you become relaxed (5 mins should do it).
- **Then at the peak of your relaxed state**, create a trigger by doing something physically unique, for example; tugging the skin between your thumb and forefinger or gently tugging one of your ear lobes and as you’re doing your physical trigger you should be saying “**I feel relaxed and peaceful.**”
- **Do this over and over again until the state of relaxation becomes linked to your physical and verbal triggers.**

You need to practice over and over to get good at this stuff, and it's critically important that you do it. I know you really want to improve, and again you wouldn't be reading this right now if you didn't. So follow through and practice your triggers all the time because they get stronger with more use. Now it’s time to show you how to use triggers to dramatically improve your entire golf game, let’s go….

**How To Create Positive Triggers For All Clubs In Your Bag!**

Long Game Triggers!

Ok, so now you have a good knowledge of how to create positive triggers and you've even done one. Now we’re going to use what you’ve learned so far so you can create positive triggers for every club in your bag. So make sure you have your golf clubs close by while doing this.

The first positive trigger we are going to create is for the club you normally drive with. Whether it is your driver, 3 wood, or whatever, pull it out.

The first important step is to remember a shot with that numbered club that **made you feel great**. If you're using your driver for this and you have only had it a short while, it doesn't matter. The shot you use can be with a club you had years ago.
So remember a shot that felt great and also remember if someone made a comment about what a great shot you hit.

Now don't be concerned about doing this “right” because at any time you can discard a shot you use to trigger a drive and use another one. You are not stuck to only being able to have one go at this. Often times I do a great shot on the golf course and then I use that as my trigger for that round.

First of all pick out the best drive you can ever remember hitting and this could be one you hit last week or one you hit 20 years ago, the period of time doesn't matter, but the emotion and feelings attached to the shot do matter.

So, pick a shot that you can remember easily, and when you recall it, you get a great feeling inside. Now write down everything you can remember about this shot, where it was, what feeling you got and write down if anyone made any comments etc. Do this now! It's critically important for your future golfing success....

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

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___________________________________________________________________________

Excellent, you're doing perfectly. Now I want you to visualize and remember this time in your life when you hit this great drive and with your club in hand setup to an imaginary golf ball as if you were standing to hit this drive again. As you're addressing the ball recreate this hole in your mind. And now as you're addressing the ball remember the feelings that you got when you hit that shot, and recall any comments you received or anything else that sparks your memory.

Now keep building up the positive emotions of this shot and keep replaying this great shot over and over in your head and as you do this and increase the positive emotions that this shot brings up for you. Keep doing this until you get to a peak of *excitement* about this shot. And then at the peak create your trigger, that is, come up with a word and/or a physical touch and this physical touch is something that you must be able to do while addressing the ball, this is very important.

So repeat this again and build up the emotion, *keep building, keep building*, feel the great feeling you had in your body as you hit this great shot, the feeling of the ball being hit, of seeing the ball streak towards your target, *what a feeling!* Keep building and at your peak *do your trigger*, whatever it is and keep doing it and again and again, keep up the emotion and *keep doing your trigger*.

Great, you're doing fantastic. Now I want you to write down this trigger so you can refer back to it at any stage. Write what this trigger is and what shot it is attached to in the space provided below...
Maybe you've found it hard to remember a shot and sometimes it has taken me up to a day to remember a great shot with specific clubs, but you must keep asking yourself the right questions like "what is a truly great shot I hit with my driver?" If you keep asking a good question like this you'll eventually come up with a good answer, you just have to persist.

You might be thinking to yourself "if I've got a verbal trigger, I can't be heard talking to myself on the golf course, they'll think I'm nuts." You don't have to, once you've practiced this trigger at home, then on the practice fairway with no one around then you can say the words to yourself inside your head and do the physical trigger if you have one and you'll still create the feelings you want.

So practice first at home and pretend you're going to hit the shot you want to recreate, and do your trigger over and over again. Remember when you first practice a trigger you have to say the words with a lot of emotion, so you powerfully link this trigger to the shot you want to produce.

Ok, so now you've created your first trigger and you're on a roll. You now have a trigger to create confidence anytime that you wish on the golf course. Plus you have a trigger to recreate the state you were in when you hit a great drive.

Now you might be thinking -- how can you use this trigger which was for your driver or 3 wood when you're hitting an 8-iron? Good question. Well what you can do is to use the same trigger all through the bag but link it to a different shot depending on the shot you have at hand.

For example, let's say that you are playing the final hole of a match and you're one down. You are faced with an 8-iron to the green that is very narrow. You hit your shot perfectly to about 5 feet from the hole and people around the green clap. So hold your 8-iron and remember that shot and build up the intensity and trigger it.

You see, you can do this triggering with any shot you have hit in the past. So, remember great shots with some other clubs in your bag and then trigger them. OK, so that's the long game covered, now we're going to look at triggers for the short game.

**Short Game Triggers**

For short game shots you can most certainly do physical triggers along with verbal triggers. You have to experiment to find out what will work best for you. But here are some examples to help you do this.

For a pitch shot you could use the word “**Pow**” because for pitch shots you want to have a nice aggressive swing and a word like “**Pow**” will help you to hit pitch shots with a confident, accelerating swing.

For a lob shot you could use a word like “**Swoosh**” because for these shots you need to make a big swing and pop the ball up in the air and that word tends to conjure up that shot.
For a short little chip shot you could use a word like “Zip” because for these shots you need a short little swing that is going to make the ball zip off the club and spin.

For longer chip shots you could use the word “Clip” because for these shots you need to clip the ball perfectly off the ground for it to fly nicely and then check up.

For bunker shots you could use the word “Splash” because for these shots you need to splash them out. For longer bunker shots you could use the word “Clip” like you do for chip shots because for longer bunker shots you often need to hit the ball first.

**Putting Triggers**

Now lets look at a very important part of this game...putting. You should experiment with the triggers you have for this but I recommend at least two different triggers (minimum). One for short putts and the other for longer putts that rely more on distance control.

For short putts you could have the word “Easy” as your trigger and as you’re looking at the hole you could imagine yourself picking the ball out of the hole. This easy act is a good association and trigger for you.

For medium to long putts you could use the word “Flow” to help you have a flowing stroke that will send the ball the correct distance.

So those are some suggestions for triggers. But there is no right or wrong with this you. You just need to remember shots that have high EMOTIONS and FEELINGS for YOU and then trigger them with your own unique triggers whether they be just physical, verbal or a combination of both.

You can even use shots from practice sessions or from practice games. **As long as the shot has high emotion attached to it and you can remember the feelings and movements then you'll have huge success using this technique.**

So after learning about Triggers and what a great benefit they'll be to your game, it’s now time to move on to **one of the most important parts of this entire course**, and that's training your subconscious mind to swing automatically without interference from your conscious mind. Quickly move on to the next chapter in your most interesting and fun, wonderful, exciting, journey...
Mental Fundamental #7 - Automatic Swing

Everything that I've shown you up until this point has been preparing you for this magical chapter. You see, there are only two ways to mentally swing a golf club…

1. Consciously, or
2. Subconsciously

But unfortunately or fortunately when a person reaches adulthood their conscious mind has developed it's full unequivocal function which is to question, to doubt, to challenge all facts that are put before it. Your conscious mind demands to know the reason for all actions and this unfortunately or fortunately severely reduces the ability for you to imitate without question.

Now I say unfortunately or fortunately about an adults ability to imitate because I'm sure it doesn't take you too much of your imagination to think of what would happen to society if adults imitated actions they saw without question!! BUT as a golfer you absolutely must learn to imitate good golfers swings if you are to improve QUICKLY!

The ability to swing the club automatically by using your subconscious mind is critical to your on going consistency and enjoyment in this great game BUT you do need to use your conscious mind before hitting every golf shot. For example when you approach a golf shot you need to analyze the situation and weigh up all the options and then come up with the best solution for the problem at hand.

"Approach every golf shot as though it's a problem that can be easily solved, simply by asking the right questions."

Unfortunately adults carry this problem solving ability (using the conscious mind) over to playing their golf shots. Asking questions about how they're going to swing the club, doubting their ability to hit the ball to their potential and challenging the fact they've hit good shots with the reality that they've hit more bad shots than good ones.

The golf swing must be performed by the subconscious mind to remain consistent because it has no reasoning ability, it accepts everything as fact. When you were a child your subconscious mind was all-powerful, with your conscious mind subservient but ever growing until you reached maturity, when the roles reversed.

As an adult your subconscious mind is waiting to receive information from the conscious mind which has been filtered and screened until the final stamp of approval is given and then it's sent to the subconscious mind for recording so it can be acted upon.

An infant learns to walk and talk and feed themselves by imitation. A youth learns to swim, run, ride a bike and swing a golf club by imitation. The conscious mind does not interfere unless the action does not produce the desired results.

As adults, when learning anything, the conscious mind demands not only instructions and being shown what to do, but the instructions must contain thorough explanation as to the how's and why's of the instructions.

As you're probably aware by now you do not play your best golf with a mind filled with rogue thoughts. The only way to swing with a so called "blank mind" is to use the
subconscious mind while swinging the club and to keep the conscious mind occupied so it can't interfere. And to do this consistently you need to learn how to do the following two things...

1. Switch off your conscious mind just before you start your swing, leaving your subconscious mind free to swing the golf club to the best of your ability.

2. Program your subconscious mind with the perfect golf swing for you.

To help you start doing this consistently, I'm giving you two CD's to listen to in the plan.

On CD #1 (I'll tell you about CD #5 in a few minutes) you'll be lead into a deep state of relaxation. And learning to relax deeply is great because it allows you to shut off your conscious mind like turning off a tap. This means you can reach your subconscious mind with any thoughts, images or ideas that you want to be acted upon.

When you learn how to do this it will...

- Help you to play shots without any conscious fear.
- Let you hit shot after shot with "relaxed concentration."
- Allow you to practice much more effectively in your mind than you have ever done physically on the driving range.
- Fill your mind with positive statements that will get acted upon automatically.
- Let you fix golfing faults quickly and easily.
- Program your subconscious mind with the swing you want.

Now you've undoubtedly wasted many, many shots because of your conscious mind interfering in your shots (i.e. telling you how to swing the club or what to avoid etc.). And you can only stop this from happening by learning to swing with your subconscious mind consistently.

**How are you going to do this?**

Well, when playing a golf shot you need to have a technique to distract your conscious mind and allow your subconscious mind free reign to perform the swing that you have programmed yourself with.

Because without a technique to distract your conscious mind it is always in a constant state of flux.

And to demonstrate how hard it is to "try" to quieten your mind consciously, try this. Right now see how long you can hold one single thought of a pink elephant in your mind before another thought comes along.

It's not long is it?

And it will never be long even if you practice this forever, because of the fact that your conscious mind's purpose is to **analyze, question** and **doubt**.

So unless you learn how to consistently swing with your subconscious mind your golf game will never be consistent and you'll always play well below your potential. Because the times when you've hit your best ever shots and played your best ever rounds are the result of you automatically swinging with your subconscious mind.
But as you've already proved to yourself, if you "try" to consciously quieten your conscious mind, you'll end up fighting with your mind and you'll get worse instead of better.

Now golfers that play nowhere near their potential almost always play with their conscious mind, which means the subconscious is not free to swing the golf club. And this means most golfers consistently play well below the potential they're capable of.

You can quite easily tell after every shot you hit whether you've used your subconscious or conscious mind to hit the ball.

How?

Simply by being aware of any tension in your body after the shot. If you have any major tension like you've been consciously controlling the shot then you've used your conscious mind to play the shot.

And here's another great way for you to see for yourself the difference between the subconscious and the conscious mind. In the left-hand box I want you to sign your name and as you do notice the way the pen flows over the paper. Great! Now I want you to try to consciously copy the signature exactly as you've just done it, this time in the right box....

Did you notice the big difference between the two movements?

See, trying to consciously copy your subconscious signature you would've noticed how slow, forced, and unnatural your hand moved as opposed to the free flowing actions of the first signature. This is because your conscious mind produces tension when trying to copy anything.

So your perfect golf shots are clearly produced by your subconscious mind. But when you consciously try to copy what you did to hit that perfect shot you naturally get the same forced, unnatural result that you received when you tried to consciously copy your signature.

Clearly the only way to copy what you did to hit your perfect golf shots is to reproduce that mindset. And the only way to consistently do that is through using your subconscious mind to automatically swing the golf club. The best way of doing that consistently is by using the tools I'm giving you in the plan.

Having said that, to get to and to use your subconscious mind you need to understand the relationship between it and the conscious mind.

OK, think of your mind as divided in two with the subconscious on one side and the conscious on the other, and between them is a wall.

All information you receive is thoroughly analyzed by the conscious mind and then once it has been tested against logic, knowledge and experience it is passed to the subconscious
mind for action. But when you are deeply relaxed this wall is removed so that you can reach your subconscious mind directly without information being analyzed or discredited by the conscious mind.

You see, the subconscious mind has no reasoning power and it acts on any image, feeling or words that reaches it. And the conscious mind is what separates humans from every other life form on this planet because of its great capacity to question, reason and analyze.

Your conscious mind is constantly taking in information, analyzing it against experience and knowledge, then after the stamp of approval goes on the information it is then given to the subconscious mind to be recorded.

Thankfully when you're deeply relaxed you can change any recorded piece of information because your subconscious mind has no filtering system, it just accepts everything it receives as the truth and records it as a fact.

And that's what you're going to be doing when you're listening to CD #1 over the next 60 days -- programming your subconscious mind with positive suggestions what will automatically improve your golf game.

Plus by listening to CD #1 for the next 60 days it will give you the best chance of getting the most benefit from CD #5.

So both of these CD's that I'm giving you are very important. But you must start with CD#1 as I instruct in the plan. And here's the format of the instructions that are on this CD and how they're going to help you to program your subconscious mind with positive golf improvement suggestions.

1. First of all you need to relax. So that is the first part of the CD. This progressive relaxation part of the audio bores the mind and guides you into a deep-relaxed state.

2. Once your body is relaxed you then open your eyes to select an object above eye level that causes a slight strain to your eyes. You then stare at your selected object and count down, so that on your last number you close your eyes. If you can't resist closing your eyes when doing this that's great. But if you don't feel a strong desire to close your eyes close your eyes anyway.

3. Next, we have a section that deepens your relaxation in your mind to help slow down your conscious thoughts even more. This allows the suggestions that you are going to be given the chance to be accepted more easily.

4. Just before we get into the suggestion part of the relaxation script we must first open our minds for the suggestions to be easily accepted. This is called introduction prior to the suggestions.

5. Next we come to one of the most important parts of the entire script, but without the preceding parts this suggestion part would not be effective.

6. Then the final part of these instructions leads you out of the deep relaxation state you were in.

So how are you going to get into a relaxed focused state before each shot? Well the instructions I give you on CD#1 uses a trigger that enables you to go into a relaxed focused
state anywhere, anytime. Here is the part of the CD that mentions the keywords that will enable you to do this...

"These keywords will enable you to go into a relaxed focused state, or if you are already in one, go into an even deeper one.....Yes, in any situation, all you will have to do is to relax and repeat in your head, the keywords and you will immediately be relaxed and focused, or, if you are already in a relaxed focused state, through these keywords you will be able to reach an even deeper state of relaxed concentration."

The key words on the CD are one, two, three. So anytime you want to go into a relaxed focused state after listening to CD #1 for a while, all you need to do is say inside your head one, two, three. Once you've programmed yourself to be able to fall into a relaxed focused state by saying these words to yourself, then you can start to incorporate this into your pre-shot routine. To briefly explain how this is going to fit in, I'll explain the concept.

What you are going to do on the golf is to use the golf ball to fixate your conscious mind and by focusing on the golf ball and counting to 3 this will automatically put you into a relaxed focused state so you can play each and every shot automatically with your powerful subconscious mind.

If you think back to any bad shot you've hit you will remember how your mind wanders and takes in a little bit of everything. As you're over the ball you will smell a little, see a little, feel a little, hear a little and you'll be conscious of all these little events happening around you.

But you see the problem with this conscious control is that your attention is not focused on any one particular thing. In other words your mind is in a constant state of flux and this is not conducive to great golf shots.

Once you've learned to relaxed deeply and you use the code words on every shot then you will cut off wandering conscious thoughts and this will leave you totally focused on the task at hand which can only lead to incredibly positive results.

To fully understand what is going on here you should know a bit about a conditioned reflex. A conditioned reflex is either a psychological or physical response to a specific stimulus that is the result of consistent and repetitive use, and once it's conditioned it then becomes automatic (for example the triggers you did in the last chapter were a conditioned reflex).

One of the main goals of CD #1 you now possess is that each time you listen to it you will be building up a conditioned reflex to put your self into a relaxed and focused state simply by saying 1,2,3 inside your head. And by the way I've added a suggestion to the script that means that only you can put yourself into this state using these numbers. So don't worry you'll always be in control, don't think every time you hear the numbers 1,2,3 you'll fall into this state, because it just won't happen.

Now, habits are what control your life and these create either good or bad results. Habits are an essential part of your life, for example, just think if each time you woke up in the morning you had to learn to walk all over again. Wouldn't be much fun would it?

Fortunately through practice and repetition you've created a conditioned reflex that when you want to walk somewhere you're body complies without hesitation. Once you've ingrained the correct habits for walking this information was turned over to your subconscious mind so that each time you wanted to walk it was a natural and effortless movement.
So for CD#1 to be of any benefit to you, you must create the habit of being able to relax and focus yourself **anywhere and anytime** you want. And you can do this easily and simply by repeatedly listening to CD #1 you now have.

Remember, success using that CD is gained only through constant and consistent use and practice. Like any habit the **conditioned reflex** you need to swing with your subconscious consistently is only gained through use, and it is impossible for anyone to say how long it will take for you to be able to induce a relaxed and focused state on the count of three. **But I will say this, it can be achieved by anyone who consistently follows through and just listens to CD #1 on a regular basis, like every night.**

It's not really that hard to listen to a CD in bed, and the benefits are amazing, so much so that once you start using the CD you'll want to keep using it more and more. The feelings it gives you are like nothing else.

And if you're worried about giving up control to your subconscious mind, don't be. Don't you trust your subconscious to breath, walk, eat, drive a car, raise a glass to your mouth and do a million and one other things without conscious effort?

**If you give your subconscious precise and accurate directions it can be trusted far more than your conscious mind, because your subconscious has no power to question, doubt, or reason, and it cannot change any message or instructions that have been given to it.**

Please remember that to ingrain any new habit takes time so don't expect to induce a relaxed focused state as a conditioned response in an hour. You will only be able to use this amazing technique if you **persist** and realize that like any habit you've formed it takes time. Through regular practice you'll speed up the amount of time it takes. So make sure you practice everyday to learn this new habit that will make golf more enjoyable for you than ever.

Just think how long it took for you to learn how to talk and no doubt even though you probably wouldn't remember there would've been times when you were trying to tell your parents something but they just didn't understand. Even though you would have been **discouraged** you continued making the effort to talk until you could be understood.

**Persistence pays off in whatever you do.** So keep persisting no matter what. Just keep listening and you will be building up that conditioned response each time you do it. So keep at it, the results are well worth the time and sacrifice plus you'll sleep a lot better too.

Now you'll find being in bed to listen to CD#1 is most satisfactory. And if you fall asleep while listening to the CD that's fine. The suggestions will still reach your subconscious mind even while asleep. Now you might achieve a relaxed focused state the first time you listen to the CD or you might achieve it after weeks of practice. But the most important point to remember is that you must preserve until you are conditioned to go into a relaxed focused state upon giving yourself code words.

**OK, here are the words that are on CD #1:**
Progressive Relaxation Induction Script

“You are now going to relax every muscle in your body… as your muscles relax let you mind relax also……close your eyes and lets begin with your feet……the toes on your right foot are relaxing… feel your toes……stretch them……they feel limp… limp….heavy and relaxed…this relaxation is creeping up through the ball and the arch of your foot…all the way to your ankle…so that your right foot is completely relaxed…relaxed and heavy….Now feel the toes of your left foot relaxing……feel your toes……stretch them……they feel limp……heavy and relaxed……heavy and limp………Your left foot is completely relaxed……Both feet are now completely relaxed….completely relaxed…limp and heavy……heavy and relaxed……heavy and limp……relaxed and heavy…..This heaviness is creeping up the calf of your right leg…so that you are now completely relaxed from the tip of your right toes to your knee…. Now your left calf is relaxing in the same manner…Both of your feet and legs are completely relaxed up to your knees…This relaxation is extending up through the large muscles of your right thigh…tense this muscle……and feel the long muscles tensing……now relax those muscles………feel them lengthening and resting comfortably so that your right leg is completely relaxed up to your hip…Now tense your left thigh……and feel the long muscles tensing……now relax those muscles……feel them lengthening and resting comfortably…..feel your legs as they sink deeper into the bed as you relax even more…..so that both of your feet and legs are heavy…heavy and relaxed…relaxed and heavy….relaxed and limp….so relaxed…so limp…Now the fingers on your right hand …Clench them, feel the tension…..now relax them….They are getting limp and heavy…and relaxed….feel your right hand relaxing more and more…getting more and more limp….more and more heavy…Now the fingers of your left hand, clench them, feel the tension……now relax them…..they are letting go completely…All the muscles are relaxing…Your fingers are getting heavy…limp…relaxed…Your left hand is now completely relaxed and heavy…This feeling is
now flowing up your arms….Your right forearm is relaxed and heavy….Your left forearm limp and heavy….Your right upper arm is relaxed…heavy….heavy….Your left upper arm is relaxed….relaxed and limp…both of your hands and arms are completely relaxed…relaxed and heavy….heavy and limp….Now you are going to relax your body…your hips…back muscles…abdomen….chest muscles….shoulders….will all relax at the same time…..take a deep breath….hold it…and release it slowly….Your entire body is relaxing…you are breathing deeply…and slowly…..Your body is now completely relaxed….You feel pleasantly limp and heavy….relaxed and limp….Your body is completely relaxed…..and you are breathing slowly….evenly….The muscles in your neck are now beginning to relax….Your head is becoming so heavy….All the muscles in your face are limp….relaxed and loose…From your neck to the top of your head you are completely relaxed…you feel pleasantly free from tension…Every muscle and every nerve in your entire body is completely relaxed….Your body feels loose….and heavy…completely relaxed….Your body is resting calmly….You are fully at ease….Every muscle….every nerve….in your entire body….is completely relaxed…..”

Eye Closer Test

“In a moment you are going to open your eyes, and select an object above your eye level, you will stare at this object and as you complete the count of three, your eyelids will become very heavy, watery, and tired. Even before you complete the count of three, it may become necessary for you to close your eyes. The moment you do, you shall fall into a state of deep relaxation.. You shall be fully conscious, hear everything, and be able to direct images and suggestions to your subconscious mind. So now open your eyes and select an object and stare at this object……One…..your eyelids are becoming very heavy and tired ….Two…..you can hardly keep your eyes open….you are beginning to close them……Three .....Your eyes are closed....

Deepener

…. You are feeling so deeply relaxed……you find it easy to focus your attention, and visualize things very clearly…… so imagine that you are standing on a balcony which has steps leading
down to a beautiful garden……as you look into the garden, you see that it is surrounded with lovely trees ensuring the garden is private, secluded and peaceful. There are flower beds set in the lovely lawn and further along is a waterfall flowing into a stream……listen to the sound of the water……as you look around, you see the trees and you hear a faint sound of a bird in the distance, adding to the feeling of deep relaxation through your entire being.

‘If you look more closely you will see that there are five steps leading down to the garden and then a small path that leads to the waterfall. In a moment you will walk down the steps and with each step you go deeper and deeper into relaxation. So let’s begin……watch your foot as you place it onto the first step……and as you do this, you feel yourself going deeper into relaxation……. Down onto the second step and as you feel your foot firmly placed on the step, you feel a wonderful relief as you drift even deeper into relaxation. Down onto the third step, feeling wonderfully free and ……so……so……relaxed. As your foot reaches for the fourth step, another wave of relaxation drifts through your whole body. Down onto the fifth step now and feeling even more deeply relaxed than ever before. Now you are standing on the lawn……you see a little way ahead is the waterfall and at the side of it is a garden bench……notice the color of the bench….what it is made of ……………

‘In a moment I would like you to walk over to the bench……and sit down on the bench……when you sit down you will be surprised at how comfortable it is……and then you will be even more relaxed than you are now……so begin to walk over…….(pause) ………now sit down on the bench…..as you sit down on the bench, take a deep breath……and as you breathe out you feel a wave of relaxation go through your body relaxing every muscle and nerve……[stay silent for the count of three seconds]……as you breath in……you breathe in positive thoughts……and as your breathe out……you breathe out negative thoughts……leaving room for more positive thoughts.’

‘As you are sitting comfortably, you see a little way ahead 10 steps that lead to a lower part of the garden……and you can see just a few feet in front of the bottom step a large heavy wooden door……set in an archway made out of stone that leads to another part of the garden…..you
don’t know what it is like through the door but you have this feeling that it is a wonderful, peaceful place.....you feel the need to explore and so you decide to walk down the steps......you know instinctively that each step will be deepening your relaxation even further.......you walk over to the top steps and as you begin to descend on the first step, a wonderful feeling of relaxation comes over you and therefore you are deepening your relaxation......the next step and you feel you are going deeper and deeper into relaxation ......down......down....to the third step, even deeper relaxed......the fourth step, deeper still.....down to the fifth....going down........down ...to ........the sixth......down.....down to the seventh......feeling deeper and deeper relaxed......you are nearly at the bottom now......down......down to the eighth step...... you are feeling so, so relaxed.......down to the ninth and ........down......down ......to the tenth....you feel so relaxed.....the most relaxed you have ever felt.........you begin to walk over to the doorway, knowing that on the other side is the most beautiful place......your peaceful place.......you put in your special code to get through this door and as you complete this code, the door creaks open and you are confronted with the most beautiful view. What makes this place so special is that you can add whatever you like,.... ...you look around and you design your special place......you know that this is the basement of your relaxation and that you can come here at any time, to address your subconscious or just to relax.....you see a comfortable place to sit........you walk over and make yourself comfortable and as you do, a feeling of pure peace of mind and a deep relaxation washes over you like a wave and both your body and mind are in complete harmony, totally relaxed......as you relax your mind, it re-energizes itself."

The Post-Suggestion Section

"Now that you are totally relaxed, now that you are in the deepest possible relaxed state, I can give you the keywords.... These keywords will enable you to go into a relaxed focused state, or if you are already in one, go into an even deeper one.....Yes, in any situation, all you will have to do is to relax and repeat in your head, the keywords and you will immediately be relaxed and focused, or, if you are already in a relaxed focused state, through these keywords
you will be able to reach an even deeper state of relaxed concentration. …When you use your code words on the golf course, you will be able to come out of this relaxed concentrated state quickly and easily by saying silently in your head “coming out of relaxation, I am confident and happy.” Only you can put yourself in a relaxed focused state by saying these keywords inside your head. Now, here they are: your keywords or, if you prefer, your code words, “One, Two, Three”…To deepen your relaxed, focused state, say, “One”…”Two”…”Three”……and you repeat in your head, “One” ……”Two”……”Three”.

**Introduction Prior To The Suggestions**

“In this deep and special state…..your subconscious mind….for your safekeeping…..monitors everything that is happening around you……Therefore, these suggestions, because they are for your benefit, go directly to your subconscious mind……where they are accepted. These thoughts become established……firmly fixed……deeply……in your inner system……embedded, so these suggestions remain with you……long after you open your eyes. These new thoughts help you to begin to change the things you want to change……and these changes allow you to enjoy your life more and more, day by day.”

**Suggestion Script**

“You make golf look easy and fun. You feel so motivated and excited about how fast all aspects of your golf game are improving. You approach every golf shot with the relaxed confidence of a champion, because you are. Before every golf shot you pick out a precise target of where you want your ball to finish. You then ask great questions before each golf shot that allows you to easily picture and imagine your ball travelling and finishing at your intended target. You then ask the appropriate questions that allow you to pick the club that will give you the most chance of hitting your ball to the target you’ve selected. Then you ask great questions that help you to visualize yourself playing the upcoming golf shot perfectly. And as you’re watching this movie in your mind it gives you an awesome feeling of confidence and self-belief. And as you continue to follow your systematic mental pre-shot routine you feel totally relaxed and comfortable and you are 100% confident that you will repeat what you’ve
just vividly visualized in your mind. Then as you move into your setup position you move your body with absolute confidence. Then once you’re ready to play your shot you stare at the golf ball and then count 1......2......3....and on three you fall into relaxed focuses state and at this point you start your swing automatically as it is produced by your subconscious mind. And during your swing your conscious mind is focused on the golf ball and your subconscious mind automatically swings the club just as you've visualized and this means you only have enough tension in your muscles to hit the ball exactly as you want. At the end of your swing you have a perfectly balanced relaxed follow-through which you hold until your ball has stopped moving and at this point you say to yourself “coming out of relaxation, I am confident and happy’ and you come out of the state quickly and easily. You repeat your simple mental pre-shot routine for every golf shot you play and this means you play golf consistently to your potential, which gives you maximum enjoyment from each and every golf game you play. And you make golf look easy because you are consistently becoming a better and better golfer which gives you so much positive enjoyment. You are very relaxed and at ease at all times on the golf course and this allows you to enjoy every aspect of your golf game. Every shot you face is easy and fun because golf is only a game. You are consistently improving every aspect of your golf game because of your newly found drive and enthusiasm for the game you love. You are hitting every club in your bag longer than you ever have before with an easier, more relaxed swing and this has dramatically increased your overall enjoyment of playing golf. You make golf look easy and you enjoy so much the improvement that you are seeing in every aspect of your golf game. You have an aggressive, confident pitching action and you love to attack the pins with your pitch shots. Your pitching action is firm and positive and you make pitching look easy. And everyday in every way you are becoming a better and better pitcher which means you make golf look easy. You have a great delicate touch when you chip and this allows you to have fun chipping the ball in the hole. Everyday in every way you are becoming a better and better chipper which means you make golf look easy. You can up and down it from anywhere because you have the best short game in the world. You love playing out of bunkers and you
enjoy the confidence you get when faced with any bunker shot and this means you make every single bunker shot look easy, because they are easy. Everyday in every way you are becoming a better and better bunker player, which means you, make golf look so easy. You have fun stroking in short putts with confidence. You are an aggressive, confident putter and you love holing putt after putt with ease. Everyday in every way you are becoming a better and better putter which means putting is easy and fun. You are a great judge of the line and weight of any putt and this means you can hole putts from anywhere. You are the best putter in the world and every hole on every green looks as big as a bucket. You make putting look easy, because it is easy when you're the best putter in the world. Everyday in every way your swing is getting better and better and this means you make hitting the ball look easy. You have a beautiful, powerful fluid swing and you always swing with great balance and poise. You make golf look easy, because it is easy. Golf is only a game and this means you play every golf shot with a relaxed, powerful peaceful mind. Golf is a simple easy game for you because you play each shot with an automatic, effortless swing. You focus easily over every shot you play because you have learnt to concentrate while being relaxed. Every hole you play provides you with a new challenge and you love and enjoy each new challenge. You're hitting the ball longer than you ever have before because you're swinging the club with more power, fluidity, rhythm, balance and grace than ever before. You are consistently holing more putts than you ever have before because you are putting with the confidence of the best putter in the world, because you are. You are holing more chip shots than you ever have before because you are chipping with the touch of a short game magician, because you are. You are pitching the ball closer to the hole more consistently than you ever have before because you have the confidence of a master pitcher to attack the hole. You are consistently getting every bunker shot closer to the hole than you have before because you are a great bunker player, the best in the world. Golf is only a game and you love playing it for the enjoyment, satisfaction and happiness that you get from consistently improving every aspect of your golf game.
Coming Out Of relaxation

“You always enjoy the pleasant, relaxed feeling of being deeply relaxed…and the next time you you listen to these instructions ………you will fall into a deeper………and more relaxed state………you will be able to relax your body more quickly………and easily………and you have an overwhelming desire to listen to these instructions each day………knowing that the next time you play golf………your body will be relaxed ………and your mind will be at ease………….The subconscious feel you have just experienced……will be brought into play………and your game will improve dramatically fast ………You know these positive suggestion will work for you……. At the count of five……You will open your eyes…….You will feel wonderfully relaxed and these suggestions will continue to go into your subconscious while you are asleep…..At the count of five…..You will open your eyes…..and feel completely relaxed…..One….Every muscle…every nerve….. in your entire body is relaxed…..and rested…..Two……You feel wonderfully well……completely relaxed…..Three……You feel wonderfully relaxed……Four……slowly beginning to move your body again…….Five…….Your eyes are open…..and you feel wonderful……..You are so relaxed and ready for a great restful night sleep…….”

How Do You Know That You Achieved Deep Relaxation?

In this script there was a section called the Eye Closer Test. This is where you select an object above eye level and you stare at that object and on the count of 3 you close your eyes. If while listening to this part of the script you feel an almost uncontrollable urge to shut your eyes, and you do shut your eyes, then you’re in a deep state of relaxation. If you didn’t feel this strong urge you should shut your eyes anyway and keep persisting because it will happen with constant use.

Once you’ve formed the habit of deep relaxation (which means you can go into a relaxed focused state on a count of 3) then you should insert this into your pre-shot routine simply by fixating on the ball, just like you do when you fixate your stare on an object in the Eye Closer Test. Then simply count from 1 to 3 and then swing automatically using your subconscious mind.

When you do this your conscious thoughts will be occupied by the ball. This will leave your subconscious mind free to swing the club. When you have reached this point you will not believe how much fun golf can be! You’ll finally feel what it’s like to swing a golf club without conscious interference. You’ll love it, I guarantee it!
But here's where it get's even better. You can use this new skill to program your mind with the perfect golf swing for you. Here's what you need to do:

You see your golf swing should be controlled by an automatic reflex from your subconscious mind. And your mind cannot be trained through physical activity but it is the mind that trains the muscles during any physical practice.

So what this means is that if you want to train your muscles to hit better golf shots then you must first train the portion of your mind that controls them. And the golf stroke should be controlled by the subconscious mind and the only way of direct contact with your subconscious mind is through a deep state of relaxation. Now before I go on I want to state the goal that you should have for your golf swing. Your goal should be to…

**Make your golf swing as natural as walking, eating or driving a car.**

And I'm going to give you the best technique in the world that will allow you to achieve this in the shortest amount of time.

But to do this over the next 90 days you must form a very clear image in your mind of the perfect swing for you. To do this I suggest you spend at least 5 minutes a day studying a great golfer's swings (i.e. Tiger Woods, Ernie Els etc.) But look at all shots though, not just full swings….watch putts, bunker shots, chip shots etc.

It's very, very important you have a very clear image in your mind as to how you want to swing the golf club for all parts of your game. Because then after 90 days of doing this you can start to program your subconscious mind with the golf swing you want by listening to CD #5.

You see on CD #5 I have the suggestion to visualize one golf shot over and over again. Why?

Because it's been proven through scientific tests that when you vividly visualize something your brain cannot tell the difference between a real event and a visualized one. So what this means is that by visualizing a golf shot perfectly you are training your mind to do exactly that.

But just imagine if you could replicate hitting 1000 shots in 10 minutes.

Is it possible?

Well, it would be virtually impossible physically and if it were possible it wouldn't do your golf game any good. But what if you could hit a thousand perfect shots in 10 minutes.

Is that possible?

It is with something called time distortion.

In the simplest terms what this means is that when you're very relaxed you can give yourself a suggestion that will allow you to visualize yourself hitting 1000 golf shots in 10 minutes.

The reason you can do this is because the subconscious mind does not record the passage of time the same way the conscious mind does. Your conscious mind records time
physically by means of a clock. It is very objective and calculates how long a thought or movement should take by seconds, minutes, hours or days.

But your subconscious mind has a completely different concept of time. It is subjective which means that time varies according to the circumstances that you are in. For example, if you’re having fun then time seems to go by very quickly doesn't it? Whereas if you're doing something boring or not very nice then time seems to lengthen doesn't it?

Now when you're deeply relaxed time can be altered by a simple suggestion and this will allow you to condense hours and hours of practice into just 10 short minutes.

And you'll be able to get even better benefit from doing this than you would by physically practicing because you'll be able to hit every shot perfectly. You'll be able to train your muscles to do exactly what you want without putting your body through the hard grind that physically hitting 1000 balls would do.

You'll be able to make yourself into a golfing machine because you can effectively hit so many golf shots in such a short space of time. And when you're visualizing it will happen in real time, but it will actually be a very short time by the clock. Just like a dream that will appear to take forever may only take a couple of minutes.

Obviously this is amazing.

BUT this is critical, there is no point in programming your subconscious mind with a swing that is not effective or not what you want to happen.

So before you do any of this you MUST have a real clear image in your mind of the perfect swing for you. So DO NOT start listening to CD #5 until you've listened to CD #1 for at least 60 days and done at least 5 minutes swing visualization practice a day.

Also when having a relaxation, time distortion, visualization session you must only practice one shot at a time. Pick one shot and visualize this shot over and over again. If you want consistently good golf then you must play with an automatic swing and this is the best way of learning how to do this.

Now no technique is of value unless you surrender to it. No one can do your thinking for you. You are the only one who can program your subconscious mind with the perfect swing for you. What I'm sharing with you here can dramatically improve your golf game and it is not difficult to learn, but it is not a gift. You must earn it through constant practice.

So that's an overview of the system for you to consistently repeat your great golf shots. Now I want you to start by turning to the plan and start to put this information into action. Because it's only through action that you are going to get the results and improvement you're after.