

**Mental Training for Baseball 2001:
Putting Your Mind in a Position to Think Confidently and Compete Well
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1. Motivation and Commitment

- Personal Meaning and Incentives (why do you play collegiate baseball, what drives you to reach your goals)
 - The Psychology of Personal Excellence (Terry Orlick, 2000, “In Pursuit of Excellence”)
 - Knowing where you want to go (having a vision)
 - How much you really want to get there (commitment)
 - How strongly you believe in your ability to arrive at your desired destination (belief)
 - Connecting with each step in front of you (focused connection)
 - Ask yourself “what type of baseball player do I want to become here at Penn State, and what is it going to take for me to get there” (vision and commitment)

2. Mission to Excellence

- The pursuit of excellence starts with getting to know your own patterns (awareness)
 - What is it like when performing at peak? How do you respond to pressure? What situations cause you to get frustrated and lose focus? What goes on in your head when you are performing well vs struggling?
 - With this awareness, you can better establish priorities, and develop strategies to gain control.

3. Connecting with your Goals: Creating a road map for success

- Challenge yourself to work on areas that need improvement
- Goals should be challenging, measurable, self-referenced, and within your control
 - Technique goals, practice goals, competition goals, mental training goals, strength/conditioning goals, etc.
- Goal Planning (begin with the end in mind, develop specific action plans and strategies for achievement)
 - Set short term goals (daily/weekly, monthly) in relation to long term objectives (season, PSU Career)
 - Balance outcome goals with performance goals
 - Outcome goals (NCAA tournament, Big Ten Championship, hit .350, etc.
 - Performance goals (In order to win Big Ten Championship, we need to commit ourselves to; In order to hit .350, I need to work on)
 - Write your goals down and specify timetables for achievement
- Monitor, evaluate, and adjust your goals based on the progress you are making (adapt and persist)
 - Get in habit of using weekly journals
 - Think of creative ways to quantify and measure your goals
- Take Pride and Ownership over your goals - be accountable to yourself and to your teammates
- Finally, have a passion for you are doing – challenge yourself to raise the bar in your pursuit of excellence

4. Mental Preparation for Peak Performance

- Develop your own mental plan for competing effectively (thoughts, emotions, attitude, intensity, focus)
 - Top performers consistently prepare themselves for peak performance (have/adhere to very systematic competition focusing plans and pre-performance routines)
- Think Like a Champion (expect to do well, believe in yourself, trust yourself and be confident)
 - Approach competition with proper mindset (mentally and emotionally ready to give it your best effort)
 - Positive Expectations and Positive Thoughts (think and act confidently)
- Visualization Training: Program your mind, muscles, and emotions for success
 - Develop your Imagination – make your imagery as vivid, realistic, and detailed as possible (“Feelization”)
 - Script Success - Imagine how you will achieve your goals (action plans for achievement)
 - Focus on what you want to occur
 - See yourself performing well in a variety of different competitive situations
 - See/Feel yourself Performing Great - with confidence, full focus, competitive intensity, and trust
 - Positive energizing cues help create vivid imaging (“quick hands”, “see it and drive it hard”)
- Mentally prepare yourself for coping with adversity and/or distractions effectively

5. **Mental Focusing: Concentration, Confidence, and Composure**

- Control the Controllables: Stay Focused on You
 - What do you need from yourself each at bat, each inning to compete w/confidence, intensity, full focus)?
- Self-Regulation Skills (mental and emotional readiness, emotion/energy management, positive self-talk)
 - Embrace the Pressure (harness the high energy of competition and make it work for you)
 - Connect with your Competition Goals (game plan, purposeful intentions, sense of being on a mission)
- Confidence (tied to the way you think, feel, act)
 - Condition your mind to think confidently (believe in yourself, expect the best from yourself, trust)
 - Success breeds confidence, hence, build on past accomplishments, find your rhythm and flow
- Concentration and Attentional Focusing (immerse yourself in the moment, connect with your performance)
 - Develop a systematic pre-performance routine and adhere to these routines while competing
 - Improves consistency and focus, enables you to take it one pitch at a time
 - Immerse yourself in the moment, quiet your mind, put everything on autopilot, trust your preparation and ability, and let your competitive instincts take over
- Poise and Composure while competing
 - Breathing: Your most versatile mental skill (clears tension and clears clutter in the mind)
 - Patience – let the game come to you (respond to each situation with confidence, poise, and full focus)
 - Refocusing: Let go of mistakes quickly and learn how to take it one pitch at a time
 - Don't allow frustration to undermine your confidence or focus
 - Be Persistent and Mentally Tough – never give in or give up