

Mental Fitness

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MENTAL TRAINING PROGRAM

P s y c h o T r a i n i n g

Table of Contents

<i>Mental Training Program: 35 Day Challenge</i> _____	4
<i>DESCRIPTION</i> _____	5
<i>35 Day Challenge</i> _____	...
<i>Day 1</i> _____	...
<i>Day 2</i> _____	...
<i>Day 3</i> _____	...
<i>Day 4</i> _____	
<i>Day 5</i> _____	
<i>Day 6</i> _____	1
<i>Day 7</i> _____	3
<i>Day 8</i> _____	
<i>Day 9</i> _____	
<i>Day 10</i> _____	
<i>Day 11</i> _____	
<i>Day 12</i> _____	
<i>Day 13</i> _____	
<i>Day 14</i> _____	
<i>Day 15</i> _____	
<i>Day 16</i> _____	
<i>Day 17</i> _____	
<i>Day 18</i> _____	4

Mental Fitness

<i>Day 19</i>	
<i>Day 20</i>	
<i>Day 21</i>	
<i>Day 22</i>	
<i>Day 23</i>	
<i>Day 24</i>	
<i>Day 25</i>	
<i>Day 26</i>	
<i>Day 27</i>	
<i>Day 28</i>	
<i>Day 29</i>	5
<i>Day 30</i>	
<i>Day 31</i>	
<i>Day 32</i>	
<i>Day 33</i>	
<i>Day 34</i>	
<i>Day 35</i>	41
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	43

Mental Training Program: 35 Day Challenge

by

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Foreword & Excerpts by
Matt Lindland

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Legal Disclaimer

The information here is designed to help you make decision regarding your mental training programs. It is not intended as a substitute for professional mental health and medical advice. You should seek your doctor's approval before beginning any physical or mental fitness program.

This book is intended to provide information to readers about mental training. Information contained in this site is general in nature. It is not meant to replace or be used in addition to the advice of healthcare professionals. If you have specific healthcare needs, or for complete information, please see a doctor or other healthcare provider.

Information on this book may contain inaccuracies or errors. Information may be changed or updated without notice. The field of mental health including research is regularly updated; therefore any information presented may be out of date.

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DESCRIPTION

The Mental Training Program is about *conditioning your mind for success*. Studies show that the most successful people, the Elite, are mentally superior and achieve Peak Performance more than others. When you study top-level athletes, you will find their diet, physical conditioning, and sport training are all great. It is their mental strength that separates the *best from the rest*. The Mental Training Program is based on the study of Elite human beings and the fields of Clinical and Sport Psychology. The Mental Training Program helps you learn and organize mental training tools into your daily lifestyle. The Program teaches a variety of mental training tools that is to be practiced and drilled for mastery with the intent of strengthening your mind. As one understands and learns the various mental training “task” (e.g., drills, exercises, activities, etc.) they become apart of your **Mental Tool Box**. The Mental Tool Box is one’s personal repertoire of mental training tools that allows mental training to occur anywhere and anytime as needed. Through disciplined practice one’s Mental Tool Box becomes more and more advanced, systematic and properly organized. The advancement of one’s personal Mental Tool Box is ultimately the key to success. This is the intent of the **Mental Training Program**.

Mental Training Program

35 Day Challenge

- The challenge requires daily commitment for an average of 20 minutes per day for 35 days.
 - The challenge involves studying and practicing daily task (i.e., “Task Of the Day” aka TOD) and recording the completion of the task via daily “tweets” via www.Twitter.com
 - TODs include readings and exercises that are apart of a mental training series (e.g., Breathwork, Meditation, Imagery, etc.). TOD’s frequently consist of videos and audio for study and practice:
 - *Subscribe for access:*
- A blue rounded rectangular button with a small circular icon on the left and the text "MTP Blog" in the center.
- A blue rounded rectangular button with the YouTube logo on the left and the text "Sports Shrink" in the center.
- The daily TODs range from a few minutes a day up to an hour. Therefore, pre-planning is recommended (e.g., read ahead 1-2 TOD’s). TOD’s will provide you with the tools for your **Mental Tool Box (MTB)**.
 - The more tools in your **Mental Tool Box** and the better the tools, the more “jobs” you can handle in your World and the better you will perform!
 - TOD’s are key to the **Mental Training Program**. You must condition your mind for success.

*"The will to win is not nearly so important as the will to prepare to win."
~ V. Lombardi*

Are you Ready?

Turn the page and start...

Right NOW!

Day 1

Task of the Day (#TOD) - Introduction Part 1

“Every artist was first an amateur.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

How do I start mental training?

During the *Mental Training Program Challenge (#MTPC)*

You will be developing a **Mental Tool Box (#MTB)**

- Your **#MTB** will **increase** as you learn, practice and implement **tools**.

Each day you learn & practice **Mental Training...**

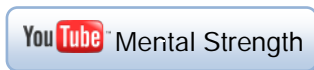
- *Daily exercises and/or activities are called:*

Task of the Day (#TOD)

-Read the following Blogs re: Mental Preparation (Parts 1-3)

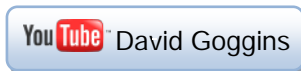


-Watch this short video re: **Mental Strength**



-Watch & **listen** to his words, the discipline, the intensity, and the **Elite mentality**.

-David Goggins – 3min “The only easy day was yesterday”



TWEET the following type of check-in after completing **Task of the Day #TOD**

Sample Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Intro P1 – I am focused & ready to succeed #MTPC day1

*This allows for monitoring your **Mental Training Program Challenge #MTPC** and Instills disciplined record keeping*

Day 2

Task of the Day (#TOD) - Introduction Part 2

WHAT does it take to mental train?

Watch these videos of Elite minds discussing **Mental Training**

When you watch **listen** to their words, especially MJ – the **Mind Master**

-Michael Jordan - 1min



-Tiger Woods - 5min



-Watch this video – memorize these 2 **keys to Success**

Steve Jobs – 2min



-Read this Blog re: **Mental Training commitment**



-**Complete** online Q&A:



-**Subscribe for free & stay updated:**



Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD intro P2 & ready for action #MTPC day2

Day 3

Task of the Day (#TOD) - Introduction Part 3

Q: *WHY all these Tasks?*

A: Mastery comes from repetition.

**“How do I get to Carnegie Hall? Practice. Practice. Practice.”
~Arthur Rubinstein**

Mental Training Program requires ultimate discipline

Discipline - *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.” – Aristotle*

- Activity, exercise, or a regimen that develops or improves a skill; training
- The rigor or training effect of experience, adversity, etc.
- To train by instruction and exercise; drill.
- To bring to a state of order and obedience by training and control.

The journey to Success is never easy

I promise if you do it (TOD) **Everyday** & **Believe** in the program (MTP)
You will be more successful

- TOD's are the building blocks to your **Long-Term Goals (LTG)**
- TOD's are the foundation of your **Pyramid of Success.**

*“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost;
that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.”
~ Henry David Thoreau*

-Spend **7 minutes** & Watch this video:



Pay attention to the metaphors

Completing #TOD daily is key to strong Mental Tool Box #MTB

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD intro P3 – I understand #MTPC day3

Day 4

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 1 – Deep Breathing

**“If you work up breathing, congratulations! You have another chance.”
~Andrea Boydston**

Breathwork helps Arousal Regulation

- Successful athletes tend to constructively use their elevated activation (physiological arousal), whereas less successful athletes endorse anxious states because their activation coupled with inappropriate or undesirable thoughts, and poorly controlled their arousal level and anxiety.

Breathwork is the fundamental self-regulation technique

- Review the YouTube videos

 How to Breathe Properly - **1 min**

 Diaphragmatic Breathing - **1 min**

- **Drill & memorize this breathing exercise:**

Track #3 ~ Diaphragmatic breathing (“Deep breathing”) – **5min**

 Diaphragmatic Breathing

 Diaphragmatic Breathing

Add Deep Breathing to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD breathwork P1 deep breathing #MTPC day4

Day 5

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 2 – Darth Vader Breath

**“Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky.
Conscious breathing is my anchor.” ~TNH**

Breathwork is the fundamental self-regulation technique

- Multiple possibilities for application
- Varieties of usefulness
- Apply anywhere, anytime, as needed

Drill & memorize the Victorious breath (“Darth Vader” breathing):

Track #8 ~ Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama

 Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama

 Ujjayi Yoga Pranayama

The best things in life are nearest: Breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hands, the path of right just before you. Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life’s plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things in life.

~ Robery L. Stevenson

Add Breathwork to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD breathwork P2 Darth Vader breath #MTPC day5

Day 6

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 3 – Mindful Breathing

“Focusing on the act of breathing clears the mind of all daily distractions and clears our energy enabling us to better connect with the Spirit within.”
~ Unknown

This exercise below is vital

Mindfulness has so many benefits

Just practice & practice → you will come to know its power well

Do NOT worry about the "history" mindfulness (unless you are interested)

True Mindfulness has been apart of EVERY culture

Drill & understand this Mindful affirmation breathing exercise:

Track #7 ~ Anapanasati Mindful Breathing

 Anapanasati Mindful Breathing

 Anapanasati Mindful Breathing

Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD breathwork P3 mindful breathing #MTPC day6

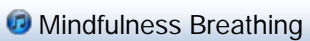
Day 7

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 4 – Mindfulness Mantra

Drill & memorize Mindful Mantra breathing exercise:

Track #9 ~ Mindfulness Breathing



After you practice the audio...

1. *Develop your own* meaningful **Mantra**
2. What is your Mantra?
 - a. Keep it simple – **Short & Sweet**
 - b. *Practice, practice, practice...*

The more mindful you are, the more...

- *Thoughtful you are*
- *Focused you are*
- *Creative you are*
- *Stress-free you are*
- **Mentally Strong** you are

“I took a deep breath & listened to the old bray of my heart: I am, I am, I am.”
~ Sylvia Plath

Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Breathwork P4 #Mindfulness Mantra #MTPC day7

BONUS:

After completing the #TOD...

- Practice your own Mantra based mindful meditation for a reasonable amount of time (e.g., 3 minutes up to 20 minutes)

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Breathwork P4 #Mindfulness Mantra & BONUS #MTPC day7

Day 8

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 5 – Rhythmic breathing

*He lives most life whoever breathes most air.”
~ Elizabeth Barrett*

Just Practice:

Track #4 ~ Rhythmic Breathing

 Rhythmic Breathing

 Rhythmic Breathing

The more mindful you are, the more...

- *Thoughtful you are*
- *Focused you are*
- *Creative you are*
- *Stress-free you are*
- ***Mentally Strong you are***

Drill & memorize this breathing exercise

Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB** *

* **Mental Tool Box #MTB** → reminder

Mental Tool Box (MTB) is one's personal repertoire of mental training tools that allows mental training to occur anywhere and anytime as needed. The more tools in the toolbox, the more flexibility, and the better outcome.

Mental Tool Box (MTB) becomes more advanced and systematic with experience and proper organization.

The advancement of one's personal **MTB** is ultimately the key to success.

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Breathwork P5 rhythmic breathing #MTPC day8

Day 9

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 6 – Power Breathing

**“Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot; but make it hot by striking.”
~ William B. Sprague**

Watch, Learn & Master!

Useful application anytime, especially...


Before an exercise/activity and after an exercise/activity

Note: *the videos may induce a **smile** 😊 but the technique is **KEY***

Practice each exercise below for **50 repetitions** each:

(Inhale + exhale = 1 rep)

1. Breath of Fire (“Rapid Fires”)

 [Breath of Fire](#)

2. Nostril Cleansing (“Nose Blows”)

 [Nostril Cleansing](#)

These can be done *standing up or seated upright*

Drill & memorize this breathing exercise

*Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB***

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Breathwork P6 power breathing #MTPC day9

Day 10

Task of the Day (#TOD)

BreathWork: Part 7 – Quest Breath

Apply **Breathwork** skills to Physical Training & Practice:

What are you fighting for?

Breathe to Live
Control your breath
Control your life
Control your breath
Control your Fight
Live to Fight
Fight to Live
Fight to Win
Win the fight
Just breathe

Fight is always a metaphor for any **challenge / struggle**

During every opportunity,
Employ Breathwork techniques...

- Lifting weights
- Jogging
- Hitting the bags or mitts
- Jumping
- Sparring
- In-between sets, rounds, or breaks...

How?

1. Use Mindful Breathwork:

- During exercise activity pay close (mindful) attention to your inhale and exhale breathing.
- Pair the proper breath (inhale or exhale) to the correct eccentric contraction or concentric contraction. Always be mindful when undergoing an isometric contraction.


2. Use Rhythmic Breathing and/or Darth Vader Breathwork:

- In-between rounds or sets of exercise/activity.
- While jogging or walking.

3. Use Rapid Fire breathing (“Breath of Fire”) or Nostril Cleansing (“Nose blows”):

- Before an exercise and/or after an exercise.
- In-between sets or intervals to intensify the “rest” period or interval.

Watch an example of Breathwork integrated into a boxing circuit workout

 MTP Mind Body - 3min

Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD Breathwork P7 #QuestBreath #MTPC day10

Day 11

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Moving Meditation: Part 1 - Experiment

Watch a team based chanting moving meditation “pre-game application”
Traditionally known as “Haka War Dance”

 All Black's Haka

 Best Haka Ever

Watch and practice a basic self-regulation technique

- *Note: Focus on the movement exercises only, not the advertisements*
- *Choose 1-2 exercises to learn, practice &*
- *Add to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB***

 Qi Gong Warm Up

 Qi Gong for Healthy Joints & Bones

Commit 5 min to practicing these

Moving meditations may look funny

But once you can **dissolve the Ego**

You will reap the benefits

Find an enchanting place and embrace...

THE WILL TO BE WEIRD 😊

“Extraordinary people achieve extraordinary things”

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P1 experiment #MTPC day11

Day 12

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Moving Meditation: Part 2 – Practice... Qi Gong & Ti Chi

To find what you seek in the road of life...

“Leave no stone unturned.” ~ E.B. Lytton

1. Watch & Do moving meditation exercises while watching the video

 Qi Gong 8 Pieces - **9 minutes**

2. Choose 1 exercise & practice for 5 minutes

The Mentally Strong has...

tHE WILL tO bE wEIRD 😊

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P2 practice #MTPC day12

BONUS:

*Experiment with **Ti Chi** on your own or find a class in your area & practice*

 Bikram Yoga Class - **10min practice**

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P2 + BONUS #TiChi #MTPC day12

Day 13

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Moving Meditation: Part 3 – Practice... Bikram Yoga

**You cannot plough a field by turning it over in your mind.
~ Unknown**

Complete 2 exercises below for a “10 count” on each leg
Utilizing the Bikram “80-20” breathing technique*

1. Bikram “Stick Pose”

 Bikram's Balancing Stick

2. Bikram “Head to Knee”

 Bikram's Standing Head to Knee

***80-20 breathing**

In this method of breathing, you take in a full breath. Go to the posture and continuously let out 20% of the air through your nose with your mouth closed. In postures that require 80-20 breathing, you need oxygen in the lungs to do the posture, so you will be able to maintain proper strength while performing the exercise.

ADD Moving Meditation #Bikram to your Mental Tool Box #MTB

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P3 #Bikram #MTPC day13

BONUS

Find an official **Bikram Yoga** class in your area & practice

 BikramYoga Class

Practice technique at home or at your Gym

 Bikram Yoga 26 Postures

Order your own **Bikram Yoga book** & master the 26 poses yourself

 Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class by: Bikram Choudhury

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P3 #Bikram BONUS #MTPC day13

Day 14


Task of the Day (#TOD)

Moving Meditation: Part 4 – Practice... Qi Gong again

**“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving”
~ Albert Einstein**

Exercise #1.

- “Holding up the Sky” Qi Gong – **2min** Watch & Learn & Practice

 Qigong - Holding Up the Sky

Exercise #2.

- Qi Gong “Holding the ball” – **8 minute** Watch & Learn & Practice

 Holding The Ball - Part 1 - part 1 (5min)

 Holding The Ball - Part 2 - part 2 (3min)

ADD specific **Moving Meditations** Qi Gong to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation QiGong P4 completed #MTPC day14

BONUS:

Commit **1 hour** & complete the entire “**Holding the ball**” series & Master!

 Holding The Ball - Part 3

 Holding The Ball - Part 7-8

 Holding The Ball - Part 4

 Holding The Ball - Part 8-9

 Holding The Ball - Part 5-6

 Holding The Ball - Part 9-10

 Holding The Ball - Part 6-7

 Holding The Ball - Part 10-11

TWEET:

@SportsShrink #TOD Moving #meditation P4 QiGong & #BONUS #MTPC day14

Day 15

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology (CSP): Part 1 – Mental Error Eraser

**“Don't believe everything you think. Thoughts are just that - thoughts.”
~ A. Lokos**

What does the research with elite athletes and cognitive skills tell us?

Elite Athlete Optimal Cognitions

- Possess greater self-confidence with less self-doubt
- Report having fewer negative self-thoughts
- More regularly possess performance related thoughts before the competition
- Endorse rational thinking, positive self-talk, and maintain a positive focus
- Follow mental preparation routines
- Are extremely confident and optimally aroused
- Focus entirely on clear tactical strategies

Mental Errors

- Lacking confidence
- Inappropriate feeling states
- Experiencing task-irrelevant thoughts
- Endorsing negative thoughts
- Deviate from preparation plans

Listen & Learn – “The Strangest Secret” audio - 10min

 The Strangest Secret by Earl Nightingale

Complete online Q&A: Mental Adversity

 Mental Adversity

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD CSP P1 mental error eraser #MTPC day15

Day 16

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology (CSP): Part 2 – Thinking Right

We are still masters of our fate. We are still captains of our souls.
~ Winston Churchill

Correct “Mental Errors” via Cognitive Intervention

- Cognitive-behavioral techniques aid athletes in becoming aware of irrational or inappropriate thinking styles.
- Techniques focus on countering negative thinking and creating more effective thinking habits.
- Distorted thinking patterns provide the athlete with faulty information about the competitive environment.
- Distorted thinking results in misdirected attention and emotional distress such as excessive anxiety or lowered self-concept.

FACT: Research shows that modifying irrational beliefs enhances performance.

FACT: Cognitive interventions improve performance.

Distorted Thinking Styles (DTS):

- **Perfectionism** - Belief that a state of completeness and flawlessness can and should be attained and that is anything less than perfect is unacceptable
- **Catastrophizing** - Focusing on the worst possible outcome. Thinking that a situation is unbearable or impossible when it is really just uncomfortable
- **Personalization** - Assuming personal responsibility for events over which the individual has no control and incorrectly thinking that everything people say or do is a reaction to you.
- **Blaming** – Holding others responsible for your pain or blaming yourself unjustifiably for the failures of others.
- **Fallacy of fairness** – Expecting fairness, universal justice and that believing others share or agree with your views
- **Polarized thinking** – The fallacy of thinking that things are black or white, good or bad, all or nothing.
- **One-trial generalizations** - Arriving at a general conclusion based on a single incident or piece of evidence.

Self-study: read the 7 DTS above and identify any DTS that you frequently utilize. Try to notice these thought patterns when they begin.

Now you are *aware* of them,
Work to *eliminate* them ~ *Mentally Erase* them from your *Mindstream*

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD completed CSP P2 thinking right #MTPC day16

Day 17

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology (CSP): Part 3 – Self Talk

“We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” ~Albert Einstein

Self-talk

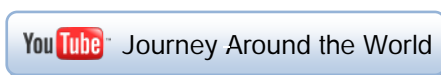
- Athletes can learn to use self-talk to build confidence as well as to facilitate learning and performance.
- This thinking process serves as the mechanism by which individuals manifest conscious perceptions and beliefs.
- Some researchers believe that employing this technique is fundamental to an athlete's ability to gain cognitive control.
- Confident athletes' positive thinking likely generates adaptive feelings and optimal performance, just as less confident athletes' inappropriate or misguided thinking likely leads to negative feelings and poor performance
- Research has shown that elite or superior athletes tend to be better equipped at reducing self-doubt and are, thus, able to manage self-talk more effectively.

Self-talk occurs when individuals think:

- **Internally** - when athletes internally tell themselves:
e.g., “**I can do it**” or “**I'm winning this.**”
- **Externally** - when athletes externally verbalize (i.e., *tell someone else*):
e.g., “**I'm going to win this right now coach.**”

Retrospection & Self-Talk Log:

1. **Listen** to this *audio track* on low volume & spend 6 min reflecting on previous life events or performances that you consider **successful**:



2. **Identify** common themes: *thoughts, expectations, and feelings.*
3. **Write down 1 sentence** in 3rd person that describes this “theme.”

Example:

When (your name here) is on A-game **there is no stopping him/her**, it is like he/she **knows he/she is going to win**, you can tell (your name here) feels **incredibly confident**.

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD CSP P3 self talk #MTPC day17

Day 18

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology (CSP): Part 4 – Mindstream

Let our advance worrying become advance thinking and planning.
~ Winston Churchill

Increase Performance Enhancing Thoughts (PET's)

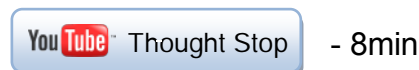
Eliminate Disabling Thoughts aka Bad Thoughts (BT's):

1. **Thought stoppage** – it can be as easy as telling yourself “**Stop**” or engaging in a physical action (e.g., snapping your fingers) when a negative thought comes into your **mindstream** (moment-to-moment "continuum" of awareness)

Practice – stopping a bad thought (BT) when one enters your **mindstream** by simply telling yourself “stop.” Next think of your own **PET Stop word** (*typically 1 syllable*):

Examples: “Out,” “No,” “Go,” etc.

Video information & practice:



2. **Changing negative thoughts to positive (or neutral) thoughts** – Controlling thoughts is difficult whereas replacing thoughts makes for a suitable and easier solution. The first negative thought is hard to manage and by practicing the thought replacing or substitution it may be easier to reduce negative thoughts over time.

Practice – as soon as a **BT** enters your **mindstream**, instantly think of a positive thought solution that replaces it to create a positive resolution.

Example:

Bad Thought (BT) – *What if, I get caught on the chin and go down?*

PET Replacement 1 – I think instead...

So what, I get caught, I take it, and return fire, and he goes down, Boom!

PET Replacement 2 – I think instead...

I duck, cover & counter and take him down instead

WATCH & Learn – Video on developing your Mindsight – 5min



Complete online form **Mental Adversity:**



Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD CSP P4 #Mindstream #MTPC day18

Day 19

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology (CSP): Part 5 – Affirmation

**“Your subconscious mind will give you what you tell it.”
~Unknown**

What you **affirm** is what you will manifest...

“What we think, we become” ~ Siddhartha Gautama

Watch this Video – 3min



Create an Affirmation, practice & make it a habit:

1. Create or revise an Affirmation related to a Long -Term goal (LTG)
e.g., *I will be 2013 Champion*
e.g., *I will lose 20 lbs. in 2013*
2. Create or revise an Affirmation related to a Short -Term goal (LTG)
e.g., *I will be victorious July 14th*
e.g., *I will be XXX lbs. on my birthday 00/00/000*
3. Pair these 2 affirmations with 1 daily habit and Affirm them each day 1time
e.g., Morning teeth brushing + Affirmation: While putting tooth paste on,
look in the mirror and state:
e.g., *I will be 2013 Champion, I will be victorious July 14th*
e.g., *I will lose 20 lbs in 2013, I will be XXX lbs. on my birthday 00/00/0000*

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD CSP P5 Affirmation #MTPC day19

Day 20

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Cognitive Sport Psychology: Part 6 – Autogenic Training (Self-Hypnosis)

“First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do.”
~ Epictetus

Autogenic training or self-hypnosis helps you to relax your body and distracts your mind from unpleasant thoughts. Unlike meditation, autogenic training often uses affirmations as part of self-hypnosis to manage stress and build self-confidence.

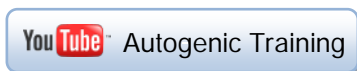
Affirmations are the positive statements that we make to ourselves to counter stress and unpleasant thoughts (see **Affirmations** for more information and affirmation development).

Self-hypnosis can help people reduce and/or eliminate tension, pain, anxiety, stress, depression and nervousness.

Self-hypnosis works through positive suggestions were the person accepts belief that the pain that is being felt or will be felt is acceptable and tolerable.

To be affective, learn cognitive skills and how to substitute negative thoughts with pleasant thoughts (see **Cognitive Sport Psychology** for more information).

Watch & Practice Video – 10 min



Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD CSP P6 autogenic training #MTPC day20

Day 21

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Mindfulness: Part 1 – Introduction & Breath Assess

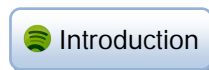
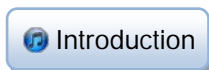
If you are doing mindfulness meditation, you are doing it with your ability to attend to the moment.” ~ Daniel Goleman

Mindfulness helps arousal regulation. The result includes decreased stress & improved focus, energy, well-being & performance.

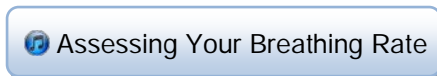
- **Arousal Regulation (AR)** begins with athletes becoming aware of the degree to which they experience anxiety and cognitions as well as physiological responses such as breathing rate, muscle tension, and heart rate.

Mindfulness is the fundamental **self-regulation** technique

Track #1 ~ Introduction



Track #2 ~ Assessing Your Breathing Rate



Breath Assess Instructions:

1. Relax & Stand or Sit comfortably
2. Take notice of your breathing
3. Inhale & exhale = 1 “breath cycle”
4. **Set a timer for 30 seconds**
5. **Start** the timer and begin counting the number of breath cycles for **30 secs**
6. Multiple this number **x2 for your baseline breath count**
7. The average # of breath cycles (inhale + exhales) is usually around **8**
8. **Record your baseline Initial Breath Count (e.g., IBC = 8)**
9. **If your IBC is higher than 8... practice more and slow down 😊**

Great fundamental exercises that can be practiced individually and utilized in group setting as well (e.g., before and/or after workouts)

Drill & memorize this breathing exercise

Add **#TOD BreathAssess** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD Mindfulness P1 intro & breath assess #MTPC day21

Day 22

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Mindfulness: Part 2 - Mindful Walk

“Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.”
~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Mindful Walking

1. Mindful walking is mindfulness-based practice that uses present moment awareness of the mind/body/nature connection to improve the quality of mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing.
2. When you apply a few simple techniques, you can turn any walk into a rewarding mental training practice.

Basic technique

1. While walking, focus your awareness on your breathing. Use this focus on the breath as a way *grounding* or *returning to center*.
2. Next, notice any sights, sounds, or physical sensations that may come up. Focus your awareness of these senses for only a moment, and then return your awareness to your breathing.
3. If persistent thoughts distract you from your mindful awareness, simply notice them, and “let go” by *return your awareness to your breathing*.

Watch and then practice this basic exercise - 3min video



Any practice is better than no practice

Best practice: Walk a mile, outside, in nature, today...

“Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet.” – TNH

Add #TOD Mindful walk to your Mental Tool Box #MTB

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #mindfulness P2 mindfulwalk #MTPC day22

Day 23

Task of the Day (#TOD)


Mindfulness: Part 3 – Body Scan

“The most fundamental aggression to ourselves, the most fundamental harm we can do to ourselves, is to remain ignorant by not having the courage and the respect to look at ourselves honestly and gently.”

~ Pema Chodron

Video Option

Watch and practice basic self-regulation **Body Scan**

 Guided Body Scan - 11min

Audio Option

Track #6 ~ Progressive Muscle Relaxation – 12min

 Progressive Muscle Relaxation

 Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Add **#TOD BodyScan** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD #mindfulness P3 body scan #MTPC day23

Day 24

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Mindfulness: Part 4 – Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

“Few of us ever live in the present. We are forever anticipating what is to come or remembering what has gone.” ~ Louis L’Amour

Audio practice

Track #9 ~ Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) – 9min

 Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Video Option:

Got kids? Practice with your child...

 Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Master this tool – it will come in handy

It can be used anywhere and anytime in very simplistic ways...

- Highly effective countering stress and tension.
- Increase self-control and nervous system regulation.

TIPS...

- When you exhale focus on releasing all the stress tension & negative energy.
- Try saying to yourself “Go” or “Free” on exhale.
- Pay attention to your heart rate & witness yourself lowering your heart rate.

Add **#TOD PMR** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet:

@SportsShrink #TOD #mindfulness P4 PMR #MTPC day24

Day 25

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Mindfulness: Part 5 – Mindful Moments (MM)

“Life exist only at this very moment, and in this moment it is infinite and eternal, for the present moment is infinitely small; before we can measure it, it has gone, and yet it exists forever.” ~ Unknown

Watch & Learn:

Mindfulness - 3min

 Importance of Mindfulness

Mindful Eating - 3min

 Mindful Eating

Extra video option:  Mindful Eating - 9min

Learn & Practice - 2 Mindful Moment (MM) methods:

1. Car MM – *Note: Rehearse and memorize the exercise before you apply while in the car.* When stopped at traffic light remain focused and with your eyes open try the following mindful exercise:

- Take a deep breath in through your nose (make sure your mouth is closed), hold the breath for a moment, and then take 10 seconds (that's the goal!) to exhale through your mouth.
- You should feel the beginning of your exhalation (counts 1,2,3) up at the top of your torso, towards the middle of the exhalation (counts 4,5,6) traveling down your torso, and by the end of your exhalation (counts 8,9,10) you should feel your lower abdominal.
- **Repeat 3x**

2. Eating MM – Mindful eating involves paying full attention to the experience of eating and drinking, both inside and outside the body. Pay attention to the experience of the body and mind. *Use all senses.*

- Avoid judgment or critique, watch when the mind gets distracted, pulling away from full attention to what we are eating or drinking. Notice the impulse and return to *just eating*.
- Try eating in silence for the first few minutes in mindful gratitude, thinking about the many people who brought the food to your plates.
- Try taking the first three sips of your drink or first three bites of your food with full attention.
- Notice how eating affects our mood and how our emotions like anxiety influence our eating.
- **Be Creative**

Add **#TOD MindfulMoments** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #mindfulness P5 mindful moments #MTPC day25

Day 26

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Imagery: Part 1 – Practice

Imagery is the process in which one is able to produce [pictures or movies in the mind](#).

Visualization includes what you see (i.e., visual goals) and why to see it (i.e., the meaning and Intention) during the imagery process. *This process will be further elaborated in Goal Setting.*

Numerous research studies have found that top athletes used imagery for a vast array of reasons, including to develop and execute skills and strategies; to generate motivation related to performance and outcomes; facilitate skill acquisition and maintenance; to regulate excitement, control, and relaxation; to be mentally tough, focused, and confident; and to achieve flow states.

Imagery research has found that mental practice positively impacts learning and performance of motor skills thus enhancing athletic performance.

Research with **Olympic** athletes' use of mental rehearsal, specifically imagery visualization reported that athletes primarily use mental practice strategies when retiring the night before the competition or even throughout the build-up to the event.

Several studies found that the most successful performers visualize with higher quality. The degree to which an image is accurate also determines whether or not an athlete's visualization will be effective.

Watch & Learn

 Visualize Mental Rehearsal

Just Practice Imagery

Audio Option “Track #5 ~ Beach Visualization” – 18min

 Beach Visualization

 Beach Visualization

Video Option – 10min

 Imagery

Add **#TOD Imagery** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD imagery P1 practice #MTPC day26

Day 27

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Imagery: Part 2 – Master Skills

“Visualize this thing that you want, see it, feel it, believe in it.
Make your mental blue print, and begin to build.”
~Robert Collier

Imagery Skills

Define imagery ability by the level of **vividness** and **controllability** that athletes have over their visualizations.

Vividness refers to the clarity and reality of an athlete's image

Controllability refers to the athlete's ability to influence the content of the image

Kinesthetic imagery may also be viewed as a property of imagery. It involves the ability to visualize images, including the sensory ability to detect bodily position, weight, or movement of the muscles, tendons, and joints. Studies have suggested that **elite athletes** had superior kinesthetic images compared to novice athletes.


The correctness of imagery includes 2 perspectives:

1. **Internal perspective** (i.e., somatic experiencing of imagined sensations)
Viewing the event through your own eyes
2. **External perspective** (i.e., objectively observing a performance)
Viewing the event through a camera on your performance

Research suggest that an **external-imagery** perspective is effective for imagining tasks in which *form is important*, whereas an **internal-imagery** perspective is effective when visualizing open-skilled tasks* in which perception is important for performance.

*Open-skilled task: where little predictability of the environment exists.

Learn & Practice Imagery Skills

Video:  Visualization Skill - 4min

Video:  Imagery - 8min

Add #TOD Imagery to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD imagery P2 master skills #MTPC day27

Day 28

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Imagery: Part 3 – Apply

“The power of imagination makes us infinite.” ~ John Muir

Investigations have identified that a positive correlation exists between an athlete's caliber (i.e., his or her competitive level) and the amount of structured or regular imagery sessions he or she utilizes.

Research suggests value in using **mastery-goal oriented imagery** to build confidence, whereas **arousal-based imagery** facilitates arousal control and anxiety management.

10 Principles for implementing imagery techniques:

1. Practice regularly
2. Use all senses to enhance vividness
3. Develop image control *via repetition and concentration*
4. Use internal and external perspectives
5. Use imagery in practice and competition
6. Use video and/or audio as needed to enhance skills
7. Use triggers or cues to facilitate quality
8. Emphasize kinesthetic imagery
9. Imagine in real time
10. Create a schedule and keep record

Review, Practice & APPLY Imagery Skills

Audio Option “Track #5 ~ Beach Visualization” – 18min

 Beach Visualization

 Beach Visualization

Video Option – 6min

 Wild Divine Imagery

Add **#TOD Imagery** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD imagery P3 apply #MTPC day28

Day 29

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Goal Setting: Part 1 – The Keys

The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible. ~ Arthur C. Clarke

Goals influence performance in four distinct ways: by directing attention, mobilizing effort, enhancing persistence, and developing new learning strategies.

Keys to goal setting:

1. Measurable goals
2. Difficult yet realistic goals
3. Practice and competition goals
4. Positive as opposed to negative goals
5. Goal Proximity: Short Term Goals (STG) & Long Term Goals (LTG)*
6. Use all 3 Goal Types**
7. Set target dates for attaining goals
8. Record goals
9. Identify goal achievement strategies (e.g., foresee obstacles)
10. Evaluate goals regularly

***Goal Proximity:**

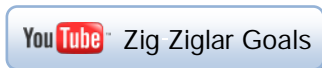
The consensus of sport goal research suggests that LT goals enhance performance most effectively when ST goals are used to mark progress.

- Short-term goals (STG) include goals related to events in the immediate future (e.g. A goal for the following week's competition).
- Long-term goals (LTG) emphasize goals in the distant future (e.g. A goal to make the playoffs at the end of the season).

****3 Goal Types of performance enhancement:**

1. Process goals involving a particular skill (e.g., increase free throw arc)
2. Performance goals (e.g., to score 20 points)
3. Outcome goals (e.g., winning the game)

Watch legend **Zig Ziglar** get excited about Goals **Part 1 – 5min**



ADD Goal Setting to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

TWEET: @SportsShrink #TOD goal setting P1 keys #MTPC day29

Day 30

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Goal Setting: Part 2 – Long-Term Goals (LTG)

“We are all inventors, each sailing out on a voyage of discovery, guided each by a private chart, of which there is no duplicate. The world is all gates, all opportunities.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

A **long-term goal** is planned to be achieved over a long period of time and may even take years. Long-term goals should be challenging and maybe slightly intimidating with a balance between pushing yourself and being realistic.

Long-Term Goal Task

Think about this below, and then **complete online form**:

1. **List LTG #1 related to your profession (sport, business, etc.**

What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

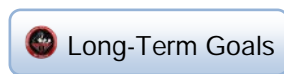
2. **List LTG #2 related to your family life**

What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

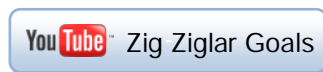
3. **List LTG #3 related to your personal self**

What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

Complete online form:



Watch legend **Zig Ziglar** get excited about Goals **Part 2 – 5min**



TWEET: @SportsShrink #TOD goal setting P2 LTG #MTPC day30

Day 31

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Goal Setting: Part 3 – Short-Term Goals (STG)

A goal is considered short-term if it will take about one month or less to complete. The **Short-Term Goal (STG)** is most effective when it is related to a Long-Term Goal. The STG therefore acts as the *blueprints or map* in route to LTG achievement.

“A goal is not a goal until you write it down, develop steps to reach it, and set a completion date for it.” ~ Zig Ziglar

Goal Types

- Process goals involve a particular **skill** (e.g., increase arc of free throw shot)
- Performance goals provide a way to **measure** (e.g., score 20 points)
- Outcome goals determine the end **result** (e.g., win the game on this date)

Long-Term Goal Task

Think about this below, and then **complete online form**:

A. Choose 1 Long-Term Goal

B. Complete the following steps:

1. List STG #1

- A. What particular **Skill** or **Technique** or **Action (STA)** needs improvement to reach this goal?
- B. How will you know the **STA** is improving and how to measure progress?
- C. What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

2. List STG #2

- A. What particular **Skill** or **Technique** or **Action (STA)** needs improvement to reach this goal?
- B. How will you know the **STA** is improving and how to measure progress?
- C. What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

3. List STG #3

- A. What particular **Skill** or **Technique** or **Action (STA)** needs improvement to reach this goal?
- B. How will you know the **STA** is improving and how to measure progress?
- C. What will it look like when this goal is complete and when will it happen?

Complete online form:  Short-Term Goals

Watch legend **Zig Ziglar** get excited about Goals **Part 3 – 5min**

 [Zig Ziglar Goals](#)

TWEET: @SportsShrink #TOD goal setting P3 STG #MTPC day31

Day 32

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Goal Setting: Part 4 – Goal Visualization

Happy are those who dream dreams and are ready to pay the price to make them come true. ~ L.J. Suenes

Think of **visualization** as movie show story. Visualization is best understood as the **visual goal(s)** that that you imagine during the imagery process. Visualization includes what you see and why to see it (i.e., the meaning and Intention).

The better picture or movie and the better the “story” or meaning, the better show, and the more applicable to real life (e.g., practice and/or competition).

Review Imagery Series if needed

Remember these keys:

- **Vividness** refers to the clarity and reality of an athlete's image
- **Controllability** refers to the ability to influence the content of the image

Goal Visualization Task

1. **Choose** you favorite inspiration song that is instrumental (no vocals)
2. **Listen & focus** on your LTG
3. **Apply** your imagery skills (**Review** Imagery Part2 - Skills if needed)
4. **SEE** yourself accomplishing this goal & basking in the thrill of achievement
5. **Repeat 1-4** except Focus on the **STG**
 - **Master** imagery skills by applying all senses
 - **Focus** on the details – **Get Vivid & Get Control**

Goal Visualization music samples:

 Pachelbel - Canon In D Major

 Carmen - Overture

See it & believe it!

ADD Goal Visualization to your Mental Tool Box #MTB

TWEET: @SportsShrink #TOD goal setting P4 visualization #MTPC day32

Day 33

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Meditation: Part 1 – Introduction

“I have brought myself, by long meditation, to the conviction that a human being with a settled purpose must accomplish it, and that nothing can resist a will which will stake even existence upon its fulfillment.”

~ Benjamin Disraeli

The practice of mediation is viewed differently across cultures and there is record of some form of meditation in every culture.

- **Meditation** is a **mental discipline** and means: concentration, ponder, contemplation, etc.
- There are **numerous** variations of Meditation.

Examples of meditation types:

- Mindfulness
- Reflective
- Focused
- Movement
- Mantra

Add **#TOD Meditation** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #meditation P1 intro #MTPC day33

BONUS

Watch Video & Learn

Expert Ken Wilber explains 3 types of meditation – **10min**



Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #meditation P1 Intro & BONUS #MTPC day33

Day 34

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Meditation: Part 1 – Zen Meditation

Focused (Zen) Meditation: Choose a focal point and focus (e.g., breath count, sound, object, mantra, or thought). This practice is very flexible as it may be applied almost anywhere or anytime (e.g., seated, standing, walking, or while engaged in any activity, even sport). The practice also allows for “open eyes” or “gazed eyes” and is often preferred by athletes.

Watch & Learn - 5min

 Zen Meditation

Watch & Practice - 7min

 Zen Meditation

Zen basics:

Once you've positioned yourself, there are a few other things you can check on.

- The mouth is kept closed.
- Unless you have some kind of a nasal blockage, breathe through your nose. The tongue is pressed lightly against the upper palate. This reduces the need to salivate and swallow.
- The eyes are kept lowered, with your gaze resting on the ground about two or three feet in front of you. Your eyes will be mostly covered by your eyelids, which eliminate the necessity to blink repeatedly. The chin is slightly tucked in.
- As your practice improves – you will be able to open your eyes and allow for a natural breathing, thus becoming more connected to your surrounding and “blending in” the natural world – *as one in tune.*

Add **#TOD Zen Meditation** to your **Mental Tool Box #MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #meditation P2 #zen #MTPC day34

BONUS

10 min practice of **Zen mediation** using only the **Metronome***

- Focus on the Metronome sound with open eyed gaze.
- **Set the Metronome to a slow speed (e.g., 20 beats / minute).**

*Download FREE Metronome:

 Metronome

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD Meditation P2 #Zen #BONUS #MTPC day34

Day 35

Task of the Day (#TOD)

Meditation: Part 1 – Sitting Meditation Challenge

“The more difficulties one has to encounter, within and without, the more significant and the higher in inspiration his (or her) life will be.”
~ Horace Bushnell

Sitting Meditation Challenge

1. Set aside **40 minutes**
2. Just Practice

Sitting Meditation Audio Track – 40min 😊



Add **#TOD** *Sitting Meditation* to your *Mental Tool Box* **#MTB**

Tweet: @SportsShrink #TOD #meditation P3 challenge #MTPC day35

You have accomplished the mission by completing the
35 Day Challenge

“A hero is born among a hundred, a wise man is found among a thousand, but an accomplished one might not be found even among a hundred thousand men.”
~ Plato

See Next Page

Congratulations

You have completed the
35 Day Challenge

“Life has no smooth road for any of us; and in the bracing atmosphere of a high aim the very roughness stimulates the climber to steadier steps, till the legend, over steep ways to the stars, fulfills itself.”
~ W. C. Doane

You have proven that you have
Strong Mind

“The mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work unless it's open.”
~ Unknown

Thank you for opening your **Mind** to the World of **Mental Training**.

Best wishes along your Journey!

FINAL Tweet:

@SportsShrink #35DayChallenge completed - I have #StrongMind #MTPC

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steven N. Hannant, Psy.D., better known as “Dr. Steve,” is a Sport and Clinical Psychologist. Dr. Steve excels at helping people learn how to use the power of the mind to successfully improve their lives and achieve Peak Performance. His doctoral dissertation and research study was with elite Mixed Martial Artists (MMA), titled “Mental Preparation of Elite Athletes: A Qualitative Study.” The athletes that participated in the study have competed in the largest MMA organizations in the world including the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC).

In 2011 Dr. Steve published his first book, *The Elite Mind of Mixed Martial Artists: Mental Preparation For Success In All Sports And Life*. As an expert in the mental health field and sport psychology, Dr. Steve has developed the Mental Training Program. The Mental Training Program was created with the intent of making mental training systematic and *mainstream*.

The Mental Training Program aims to help athletes, fitness enthusiasts, individuals interested in health, wellbeing and performance enhancement learn how to use the power of their own mind to be more successful. The Mental Training Program teaches that through study, practice, and organization anyone can increase his or her mental strength.

In addition to a fulltime clinical psychology business, Dr. Steve works as a mental coach to top-level MMA and WMMA professional athletes and provides ongoing consultation to the leading International MMA organization Team Quest.
www.MMATeamQuest.com

Dr. Steve host the website www.MentalTrainingProgram.com and continues the ongoing study of Sport Psychology in efforts to evolve the Mental Training Program.



"Dr. Steve"
Steven N. Hannant, PsyD.
Clinical & Sport Psychologist
In Relentless Pursuit