



Mental Practice

You've probably worked on your swing but have you worked on your mind?

1: STRENGTH

Nicklaus and Tiger are famous for it. Mental toughness: performing when it matters most. "It's having the strength to stand up to pressure.

What to do – Don't give yourself Gimmes

To get acclimated to pressure, embrace it. Put yourself under it. For starters, I recommend putting every short putt, even if someone is waiting behind you. "Act like the shot matters, and you'll be more ready to hit it when it really does."

2: FLEXIBILITY

Your mind needs to be as limber as your body. The most successful players adapt to different courses and conditions. They think creatively and accept things as they come. When Vijay Singh was asked if an Augusta downpour bothered him, he replied, "Only if it's just raining on me."

What to do – Reconsider your clubs

Mental flexibility means keeping your mind open. Just because you're in the bunker, it doesn't always mean it's a sand wedge." To promote creative thinking, take one club and work around the practice green, hitting many kinds of shots: high, low, soft, hard. The next time around, choose just one shot and practice hitting it with every club in your bag.

3: BALANCE

One shot at a time. Stay in the moment. Theses do work. Not getting too excited, not getting too depressed, that's what mental balance is all about.

What to do – Take stock of your thoughts

During your round, count how many times you find yourself dwelling on the past or pondering the future. Are you still simmering over that three-putt? Are you already dreading that tee shot on 18? Tally the number of times your mind drifts beyond the present. Your goal: Get that number down to zero.

4: STAMINA

Any round of golf that matters is full of stressful moments and emotional swings. The key is to minimize them as much as possible so that you can conserve your mental energy.

What to do – Beware of your own Amen Corner

Everybody has that point, usually half way through the round, when you're far enough along to know how you're playing but too far from the finish to slip into cruise control. This is your Amen Corner, a perilous stretch where you might feel inspired to start playing desperate catch up if you're off your game or get nervous about keeping a good round going. The key: Stick to your game plan. Playing poorly? Don't fire at pins in a mad rush to make birdies, unless that's your style. If you're playing well, beware of becoming too cautious and protective of your score. Such ill-advised adjustments lead to trouble, trouble raises stress levels, and stress burns mental energy, energy you'll need to play your best.

If you need help with your game please get in touch with me email jude@teachgolf.co.uk or visit www.teachgolf.co.uk

You can get help with your mental game if you visit my website <https://teachgolf.co.uk/downloads/> to download audio books that will help your game.

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