With winning in mind

19 chapter

The mental management system

Lanny Bassham

From interviewing hundreds of Olympic winning athletes, they all answered that 90% of their game is MENTAL.

How much time do they spend on training mental part of the game?

Usually answer is the same: very little or less than 10%.

What separates winners from others is mainly the way they THINK.

When athletes have mindset that they EXPECT to perform well, winning is automatically an option.  For others, hope is their mindset.

Desired outcome needs to be CONCRETE in your mind.

Process is primary.  Think about executing mental and physical processes, NOT about winning.  Thinking about winning can pull thoughts away from process. Need to think about PROCESS.

*For business:  Think about how you improve your mental and business processes, rather than making a certain amount of money.*

“One thing is certain however, your worth as a person is not equal to your score this day.”

*For business:  Self worth not equal to net worth*

“So, should we be concerned at all about winning? Certainly. And the best focus, in my view, is on a winning performance, not on finishing on top. I suggest that you goal set to have a winning performance on the day of competition instead of goal setting to win the competition. What is the difference you ask? If you goal set to have a winning performance you will always be process-oriented and not outcome-oriented. You will be much less likely to over-try in the competition because you are always focused on the next step and not counting your score.”

This is really critical for goal setting.  Focus on performance.

E.g.

producing x levels per week.

Producing x games per week.

Rather than making $x today.

**Principles of Mental Management**

**#1 – Your conscious mind can only focus on one thing at a time.**

At any point in time you are either picturing something that will help you or hurt you.

If you are focused on leaderboard (business: money) then your performance will suffer.

If you focus on performing well for the shot (business:  execution) then you maximize chance for success.

Take control of your thoughts so that they help you.

**#2 – What you say is not important.  What you cause yourself or others to PICTURE is crucial.**

**#3 – The subsconscious mind is the source of all mental power.**

**#4 – The self image moves you to do whatever the conscious mind is picturing.**

“I realize that my self-image is moving me to perform what I am consciously picturing. I control what I picture and I only picture what I want to see happen”

**#5 – Self image and performance are always equal.  To change your performance you must first change your self image.**

The upper and lower limits of our comfort zone is defined by our self image.  If we perform below this zone, self-image will help us move back into the zone.  If we start performing above this zone, self-image will pull us down.  Change the zone to change performance.

If you believe that it is “like you” to earn $100,000 per year, you will trend towards that.

If your self-image is that it is “like you” to earn $10,000,000 per year, you will trend towards that.

**#6 – You can replace the self image you have with the self image you want.**

**#7 – Principle of reinforcement.**

The more we think about, talk about and write about something happening, we improve the probability of that thing happening.

We influence one another. All these principles are not just related to ourselves but also to our team mates.

Talk about your good shots. Will improve probability of good shots in future.

Write down goals.  Won’t guarantee outcome, but helps build self image needed to attain the goal.

Be careful not to complain! This is negative reinforcement.

Do not reinforce a bad shot by getting angry.

Don’t reinforce a bad day at the office by complaining to your spouse.

Instead, remember something that you did well during the day and focus on that instead.

Fill your thoughts only with the best performances.  This is like my journaling – “What went well and why”.  Focus on positive to reinforce those outcomes, build self-image.

*“Positive Prediction” – Reinforcement in advance.* Compliment given in advance of future action.

*Praise – Reinforcement after the fact.* Praise good performances and the good performances will repeat.  If praising others becomes your habit, you will soon be surrounded by competent people who love to work with you.

Example:  Author called up teacher and asked for meeting. Teacher thought there was problem (that is why parents usually call).  Instead praised teacher with how good they were.  Then teacher performs better.

**GOAL SETTING**

Most goal setting systems are flawed, because focus on outcome.  The focus is often on score or winning competition.  Should set goals on the process of getting a score that can win the competition.  When you focus on improving performance you are dealing with something in your control.  Outcome is not in your control.

E.g. you can control how many days per week you train. Can control the competitions you enter. Can choose how you train.

ONLY SET GOALS ON THINGS THAT YOU CAN CONTROL!  Keep your focus on YOU not on your competitors.

Pitfalls.  People equate worth as a person on whether they reach goal or not.

Step 1. Determine a goal worth trading your life for.

Step 2. Decide when you want it.

Putting a time limit help formulate plan to achieve goals.

Step 3.  List the pay value. WHY do you want the goal?

Step 4.  Evaluate obstacles in your way. What habits and attitudes do you need to change in order to achieve your goals?

Step 5.  What is the plan to get your goal?

Prepare a written plan to overcome each obstacle.

Step 6. Evaluate Plan.

Step 7.  Schedule Plan.

Step 8. Start now.

Step 9. Prior to reaching goal, always set a new one to take its place.

The day he received Olympic medal was amazing but also traumatic. What do I do now? What meaning do I have in life?

Write goals in first person, present tense. “I am the 1984 olympic gold medalist in ladies match pistol” WRITE IT OUT IN YOUR JOURNAL EVERY NIGHT.  Helps build needed self-image.

**REHEARSAL**

Principle of Mental Management #8 – The self-image cannot tell the difference between what is real and what is vividly imagined.

Rehearsal relates to seeing and feeling desired results in the mind.

There is no one perfect way to do it. It is individual. For some blurry, for some vivid.  Can do it in seconds or minutes.  No one right way.  But doing mental rehearsal can improve performance.  Can rehearse performance beyond what can currently achieve.

“In the 1976 olympics I was very calm, because I had rehearsed over and over every possible that could happen in the match and how I would respond. I was confident that I had planned for every possible contingency, which reduced my stress and allowed me to perform well”

*Using rehearsal to improve attitude.*

#1 – Define situations in which your attitude needs to be maximized

#2 – Decide what attitudes you need in these situations

#3 – Rehearse that you are in these situations and **feeling** the way you desire to feel.

Using “rehearsal” and not visualization as terminology. It is about how you FEEL also, not just visual. You should FEEL it.  What does it feel like to move properly?

**Phases of performance**

1 – Anticipation

2 – Action

3 – Reinforcement: **This phase is often overlooked.** Too many athletes reinforce bad performances by thinking and talking about them.

Great players are not created – they create themselves.

Passion for the process. Willing to train 10 hours a day, enjoy it. Passion for training.

**Training guidelines**

**#1 – Catch yourself doing something right**.

If you study failure, you become an expert on how to fail.

*Business: Perhaps retrospectives should focus on what went WELL.*

If poor performance, rather than “Why do I always do that?!”; better:

“What do I need to do to make that shot good?”

And if a good shot “That’s a good shot! What did I do right?”

**#2 – Train 4 or 5 days a week.**

This is optimal to move up the mastery curve.

**#3 – Wherever you are, be all there.**

Be 100% present and focused, leave your day to day issues behind.

**#4 – Rehearse match day within the training session**

**#5 – When you are playing well, play a lot.**

Don’t stop! If you’re having a good day, keep going. Helps reinforce good experience and makes it more likely to occur in future.

If you are having a bad training day, stop training. Do not practice losing.

**#6 – We raise ourselves to the standard we are around.**

Train with people who are better than you.  Veteran players are often helpful to the young ones coming into the sport.

This can be akin to going to a [high level **mastermind**](http://makeappmag.com/masterminds/) in the business world.

Self-image can benefit from seeing technique of better players.

**#7 – Plan your year.**

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

Must keep a PERFORMANCE JOURNAL. (Same advice as is given to entrepreneurs!)

You cannot manage what you don’t measure.

Write down what you wish to have happen. Will help change self image.

DON’T write out things that you don’t want to happen.

In performance journal NO reference to bad shots or performance.

For BJJ training I should keep a performance journal.

**General.** Date and Event (i.e. Training / Competition), Hours. What did you learn? What did you accomplish? How did you spend your time in training? Results / Score?

**Solution Analysis.** Write solutions to challenges discovered during training day. If can’t find a solution, write “I’m looking for a solution to…”

**Success Analysis.** Write down everything you did well during the training day. Forces you to be positive about your performance.

Goal Statement. E.g. “I often shoot above 390/400”; “I am on the US Olympics team”

**DIRECTIVE AFFIRMATION**

Paragraph written in first person.  Paragraph that describes goal, pay value (the “why”), plan and habits and attitudes that affect goal.

Helps self image to change.

e.g. “21/11/2017.  I am the best free-throw shooter on my team.  I start each game and I enjoy the chance to help my team win by making free-throws.  I always run a mental program before each shot and reinforce each successful basket by saying “That’s like me!”.  Then I focus on the next shot or play. Also I record my performance analysis and read and visualize my Directive Affirmation daily. I am the best free-throw shooter on my team.”

Place this in at least 5 prominent places where you will see this throughout day. Each time you come across the Directive Affirmation, read and VISUALIZE it.

Run it for 21 days, then remove and rest for 9 days.

The either modify it, replace it or repeat it.

Very important to set the correct goal.

Bad goal: lost 10 pounds (this can cause yo yo, because once lost it, can regain).

Better goal: weight 160 lbs and maintain it.

E.g. Smoking

Bad goal: stop smoking (can stop and then re-start).

Better goal:  to be a non-smoker.

Do not wait until you feel totally prepared for competing.  Perfection is the purest form of procrastination.

Praise in public, correct in private.   Public praise raises self image. Praise twice as much as you correct.  By praising you are building.

Mistakes

Focus should be on learning from failure, not thinking about it.

**Action Items**

I can apply the lessons from this book to directly to my Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training (or any other skill acquisition) and also in general to my own self improvement in business and other spheres of my life.

**BJJ**

* Aim to go in a competition for the learning experience.
* Train 4 days per week.
* Keep a Performance Journal
  + Record each training:
  + 1) what went well
  + 2) what did I learn
  + 3) what challenges do i need solutions for?
  + 4) state my goals as far as BJJ is concerned.

**Self Improvement**

* Use much more praise – build up team mates.  2x praise vs correction.  Praise in public, correct only in private.
* In business retrospectives – try using focus just on what went well?
* “Train with people who are better than you” – join high level mastermind.
* In journal write down my goals **every day** for business, social, relationships and any other critical areas of my life.
* Determine a key focus in my life.   Use mental rehearsal. Devote regular time per day (5 minutes) for this.
* Write down this key focus (directive affirmation) and put in prominent areas around work / home.  Read and visualize multiple times per day.

Many elite competitors believe success in their sport is 90% mental. Lanny Bassham, Olympic Gold Medalist in Rifle Shooting, writes about his Mental Management system in [With Winning in Mind](http://amzn.to/2lRE3qU). Lanny Bassham realized early on in his career that all the practice in the world wouldn’t matter if he didn’t have the right mental management system in place during competitions. Once focusing on his mental game, he won multiple gold medals and proved his Mental Management system worked.

Over the years, Bassham has trained multiple athletes and professionals. Through his methods, he has produced many winners. I was interested in [With Winning in Mind](http://amzn.to/2lRE3qU) because I’m consistently looking for an edge on the competition.

Mental management is the process of improving the probability of having a consistent mental performance, under pressure, on demand

Summary of With Winning in Mind

Bassham describes three parts to mental performance: the Conscious Mind, the Subconscious Mind, and the Self-Image.

The Conscious Mind is what you use when you visualize or think during a competition.

The Subconscious Mind is utilized when you become proficient, the concept of “not having to think about a task”.

A person’s Self-Image is how you think about yourself. If you believe in yourself, you have a positive Self-Image and are able to succeed at a high level.

The Mental Management system looks to grow each of the 3 parts of Mental Performance. When the Conscious Mind, the Subconscious Mind, and the Self-Image are in balance, you will have your best performances. If any one of those are out of balance, your performance will suffer. In [With Winning in Mind](http://amzn.to/2lRE3qU), Bassham gives you concrete steps to get you to the next level of mental performance.

With the framework of the Conscious Mind, Subconscious Mind, and the Self-Imagein place, Bassham talks about the Nine Principles of Mental Management :

1. Your Conscious Mind can only concentrate on one thing at a time.
2. What you say is not important. What you cause yourself or others to picture is crucial.
3. The Subconscious Mind is the source of all mental power.
4. The Self-Image moves you to do what the Conscious Mind is picturing.
5. Self-Image and performance are always equal. To change your performance, you must first change your Self-Image.
6. You can replace the Self-Image you have with the Self-Image you want, thereby permanently changing performance.
7. The Principle of Reinforcement: The more we think about, talk about and write about something happening, we improve the probability of that thing happening.
8. The Self-Image cannot tell the difference between what actually happens and what is vividly imagined.
9. The Principle of Value: We appreciate things in direct proportion to the price we pay for them.

The most important principle is #5. Your Self-Image and performance are always equal. If you don’t believe you can do a task, then you won’t be able to do it. If you have a positive Self-Image and know it is “like you” to be able to do something, then you will do it with ease.

Through affirmations and visualization, you can grow your Self-Image. You can improve your situation and replace your current Self-Image with the one you want. If you want to become a world class athlete, tell yourself you are one. Tell yourself you can lift heavy weights, run fast, and are agile.

It is important to reinforce the positives vs. focusing on the negatives. If you focus on the errors, you reinforce that it is “like you” to make errors. Focusing on the positives and saying, “It’s like me to be successful and it’s like me to be able to do it”, you can accomplish whatever you put your mind to.

Mental management comes down to focusing on the task at hand consciously, having and trusting your ability to perform the task subconsciously, and knowing it is “like you” to do the task. By having a balance between your conscious and subconscious minds, and your self-image, you can succeed in anything you do.