



***PRIME SPORT 101:***  
***Train Your Mind like a Champion***  
**Mental Training Workbook**  
**Jim Taylor, Ph.D.**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

**Class #1: Introduction..... 1**

**Class #2: Mental Muscles I ..... 5**

**Class #3: Mental Muscles II ..... 9**

**Class #4: Mental Tools I..... 13**

**Class #5: Mental Tools II..... 16**

**Class #6: Tips from the Top & Wrap-up ..... 25**

## CLASS #1: INTRODUCTION

---

### Prime Sport

- Prime Sport: Performing at a *consistently* high level under the most *challenging* conditions.
- Prime Sport is about strengthening mental muscles and creating a mental toolbox.
- What competition are you competing in?
  - Competition against your opponents.
  - Competition against the conditions.
  - Mental competition.
  - You must first win the mental competition!
- What are you preparing for? Prime Time!
  - Most challenging conditions.
  - Toughest competitors.
  - Biggest competition of your life.
- Your mind: tool or weapon?
  - Weapon: overthinking, worry, negativity.
  - Tool: motivated, confident, focused.
  - Goal: Create a mental toolbox that helps you use your mind as a tool.
- My approach to mental training.
  - Just like conditioning and sport training.
  - Comprehensive, structured, consistent.
- Own your mind.
  - You must own every aspect of your sport: conditioning, training, equipment, mind, sleep, diet, relationships, school.
  - Are you fully owning your mind?
  - Prime Sport 101 gives you the information and tools to own your mind.
  - You must make mental training a part of your overall training program.

## Prime Sport Profile

---

**Motivation** – How determined you are to train and compete to achieve your sports goals. (1-not at all motivated; 10-very motivated)

**Confidence** – How strongly you believe in your ability to perform your best and achieve your sports goals. (1-not at all confident; 10-totally confident)

**Intensity** – Whether your physical intensity helps (relaxed and energized) or hurts (get too low or too high) your competitive performances. (1-hurts, too low or too high; 10-helps, just right)

**Focus** – How well you're able to stay focused on performing your best and avoid distractions that hurt your performing. (1-distracted; 10-focused)

**Mindset** – Whether what goes through your mind in the 1-3 minutes before your competition begins helps or hurts you. (1-hurts; 10-helps)

**Emotions** – Whether you lose control of your emotions and they hurt your performances or you have control over your emotions and they help your performances. (1-lose control, hurt; 10-have control, help)

**Routines** – How much you use routines in your preparations including in the gym, during training, and before competitions. (1-never; 10-often)

**Imagery** – How much you use imagery away from your sport, during training, and at competitions. (1-never; 10-consistently away from your sport, during training, and at competitions)

**Breathing** – How much you use breathing as a tool to prepare for training and competitions, during performances, and to recover after performances. (1-never; 10-always)

**Trust** – Before a competition, how well you are able to trust yourself and allow your body to do what you've trained it to do. (1-not at all; 10-complete trust)

**Prime Sport** – How often you experience Prime Sport (performing at a consistently high level under the most challenging conditions). (1-never; 10-often)

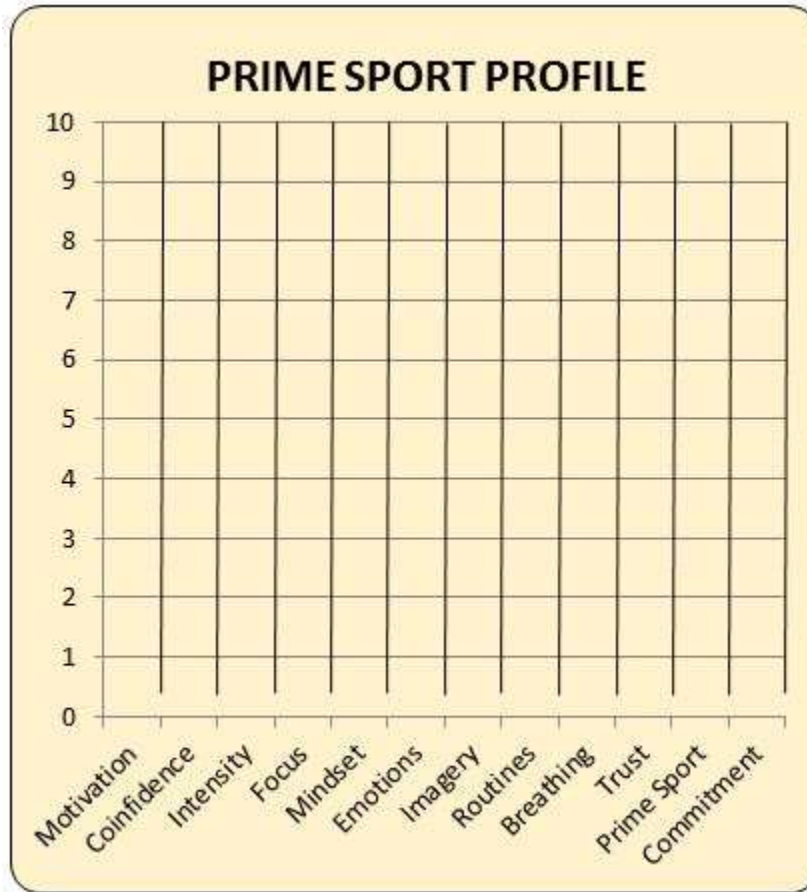
**Commitment to Mental Training** – How committed you are to using mental training to achieve your sports goals. (1-not at all; 10-totally)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Twelve mental muscles and tools that impact sports are identified in the profile below. Using the definitions provided above, rate yourself on a 1-10 scale for each factor by drawing a line at that level and shading in the area. Circle the mental areas in which you score below a 7 to indicate in need of improvement.

Note: Coaches should complete the profile for their athletes to reality test their perceptions of themselves.



**CLASS #1: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES**

---

**Exercise #1.1:** Based on your Prime Sport profile, make a list of the mental areas that you need to work on most.

---

---

**Exercise #1.2:** Describe why you need to develop these mental areas.

---

---

**Exercise #1.3:** Detail how the mental areas you identified cause you problems in your training and competitive efforts.

---

---

**Exercise #1.4:** Describe how you would like to be in these mental areas in training and competitions.

---

---

## CLASS #2: MENTAL MUSCLES I

## Mental Muscle #1: Motivation

- Motivation: The determination to do what is necessary to achieve your sports goals.
  - Putting in the effort every day in all parts of your life.
  - Being able to work hard in the face of pain, fatigue, boredom, and the desire to do other things.
  - Making your sport your #1 priority.
  - Making choices that will help you reach your sports goals.
- Key aspects of motivation.
  - Motivation influences every aspect of your life including physical conditioning, sport training, equipment preparation, mental preparation, sleep, nutrition, school, and social life.
  - Motivation is the only contributor to your sport that you can control.
  - Effort vs. goals: Your effort must be consistent with your goals.
  - The Grind: When it gets hard is when you must bear down and push through.
- Causes of low motivation.
  - Feeling pressure to compete.
  - Inadequate or unclear process and tools for success.
  - Lack of confidence in your abilities.
  - Demotivating team culture.
  - No fun!
- Symptoms of low motivation.
  - Lack of desire to train.
  - Less than 100% effort in training.
  - Skipping or shortening training.



**Exercise 2.1:** Describe any causes or symptoms of low motivation that you experience.

---

---

- Motivation tools.
  - Set goals.
  - Focus on your long-term goals.
  - Train smart: Have a training program that includes variety, plenty of rest, and allows balance in your life.
  - Have a training partner or group who can push you.
  - Use motivational cues: words, phrases, photographs.
  - Identify your greatest competitor: Ask if you're working hard enough to be beat him/her.
  - Ask two daily questions: Morning: "What can I do today to become the best athlete I can be?"; Evening: "Did I do everything possible today to become the best athlete I can be?"
  - Motivation must come from within: identify the deep reasons why you competition.

**Exercise 2.2:** Choose 3 motivation tools you can use to increase your motivation and where you will use them.

---



---

## Commitment

- Commitment is essential to achieving your athletic goals.
  - It's one thing to say you are committed to your sports goals (talk is cheap!).
  - It's another thing to demonstrate that commitment every day.
- Commitment is a moment-to-moment experience.
  - It involves many forks in the road every day.
  - Examples: "Should I do my warm-up?" "Should I go to sleep early?"
- There are many obstacles to consistent commitment.
  - Boredom, pain, fatigue, more attractive alternatives.
  - You must decide what is more important: any of the above or your sports goals.
- Recognize when you are faced with these forks in the road and take the good road toward your sport dreams.

**Exercise 2.3:** Make a list of moment-to-moment choices you need to make each day to achieve your sports goals.

---



---



## Mental Muscle #2: Confidence

- How strongly you believe in your ability to perform your best and achieve your goals.
  - Confidence is a muscle: It needs to be exercised to get stronger.
  - Confidence challenge: Staying confident when things aren't going well.
- Causes of low confidence.
  - Poor preparation.
  - Negative thinking.
  - Failure.
- Symptoms of low confidence.
  - Self-doubt.
  - Anxiety.
  - Lack of full effort.
  - Cautious performing.

**Exercise 2.4:** Describe any causes or symptoms of low confidence that you experience.

---

---

## Confidence Tools

- Preparation: Knowing that you've done everything you can to perform your best.
- Mental toolbox: To give you confidence when things break down.
- Adversity: Knowing you can handle whatever is thrown at you.
- Support from others: Knowing others are with you in your journey.
- Success: Little "victories" in training lead to big victories in competitions.
- Self-talk: What you say to yourself matters.
- Give-up vs. fire-up negative thinking: Use fire-up negative thinking to rev you up.

**Exercise 2.5:** Choose 3 confidence tools you can use to build your confidence and where you can use them.

---

---

CLASS #2: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

---

**Exercise #2.6:** Identify low-motivation situations in your training and use mental exercises and tools to get motivated.

---

---

**Exercise #2.7:** Identify situations in which you are confronted with the Grind in your conditioning this week and push through them.

---

---

**Exercise #2.8:** Use three confidence tools this week and see how it affects your performances.

---

---

## CLASS #3: MENTAL MUSCLES II

### Mental Muscle #3: Intensity

- Definition: Amount of physiological activity you feel before and during training and competitions.
- Range of intensity: Really relaxed to really intense.
- We are physical beings: Without physical readiness, you can't perform your best.
- Goals.
  - Identify your ideal intensity.
  - Monitor and adjust your intensity.
  - Reach your ideal intensity consistently in training and competitions.
- Causes of poor focus.
  - Unclear process.
  - Distractions.
  - Stress.
  - Outcome focus.
- Symptoms of poor focus.
  - Distracted.
  - Inconsistent.
  - Poor effort.



**Exercise 3.1:** What causes and symptoms of poor focus do you experience in your sport?

### Identifying Your Prime Intensity

- Recall past competitive performances.
  - What was your intensity when you performed well?
  - What was your intensity when you performed poorly?
  - Identify pattern.
- Experiment.
  - Train with low, medium, and high intensity.
  - When do you perform your best?

**Exercise 3.2:** Based on past experience, what level of intensity do you perform best at?

---



---

## Intensity Tools

- Good physical, technical, and mental preparation before training or competitions.
- Psych-up: move your body, high-energy self-talk and body language.
- Psych-down: calming self-talk, deep breathing, muscle relaxation, slow pace.
- Mental imagery: See and feel yourself competing at an ideal intensity.
- Listen to fire-up or chill-out music.
- Smile!

**Exercise 3.3:** Choose 3 intensity tools you can use to improve your intensity in training and competitions and describe how you will incorporate them into your performing.

---



---

## Mental Muscle #4: Focus

- Definition: Focusing on things that help you perform your best and blocking out distractions that prevent you from performing fast.
- Benefits: effectiveness, efficiency, consistency.
- Goals.
  - Identify and focus on good things.
  - Identify and block out distractions.

**Exercise 3.4:** What causes and symptoms of poor focus do you experience in your sport?

---



---

## Focus Tools

- Have clear goals and process.
- Identify and limit bad distractions.
- Mental imagery.
- Breathing.
- Routines.
- Messages on equipment.
- 3 Ps: positive, process, present.

**Exercise 3.5:** Choose 3 focus tools you can use to improve your focus and where you will use them in training and competitions?

## Mental Muscle #5: Mindset

- Definition: What is going through your mind just before your competition.
- Three bad mindsets: outcome, doubtful, fearful.
- Three good mindsets: aggressive, calm, clear.
- Aggressive mindset.
  - Increase intensity: rev engine.
  - Aggressive self-talk: “Attack,” “Charge,” “Let’s go!”
  - Aggressive breathing: intense exhales.
  - Aggressive imagery: See and feel yourself performing aggressively.
- Calm mindset.
  - Reduce intensity: relax muscles.
  - Calm self-talk: “Easy does it,” “Calm,” “Chill out.”
  - Calm breathing: slow, deep breaths.
  - Calm imagery: See and feel yourself performing relaxed.
- Clear mindset.
  - Nothing related to the competition in your mind.
  - Moderate intensity: relaxed, but energized.
  - Talk with others around you.
  - Full breaths.
  - Smile.

**Exercise 3.6:** Which mindset do you usually have in competitions and do you think it is best?

## Mindset Tools

- Developing an ideal mindset.
  - Experiment with different mindsets.
  - Identify ideal mindset.
  - Ingrain ideal mindset in training.
  - Use ideal mindset consistently in competitions.
- Tools.
  - Self-talk.
  - Breathing.
  - Mental imagery.

**Exercise 3.7:** What mindset do you want to use in your sport and how can you create it?

---



---

## CLASS #3: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

---

**Exercise #3.8:** Identify and achieve your ideal intensity consistently in training and competitions.

---



---

**Exercise #3.9:** Practice using the focus tools in training.

---



---

**Exercise #3.10:** Experiment with different mindsets in training.

---



---

## CLASS #4: MENTAL TOOLS I

### Mental Tool #1: Emotions

- Emotions are the foundation for your sport and life.
  - Give your life texture and depth.
  - Propel you in your sport.
  - Essential piece of the Prime Sport puzzle.
- Problem: Emotions can be weapons or tools.
  - Weapons: negative, uncontrollable, overwhelming, hurt mind and body, interfere with performance, feel bad.
  - Tools: positive, controlled, moderated, drive performance, feel good.
- Four aspects of your emotional life.
  - Emotionality: How strongly you feel emotions (1-not at all; 10: very)
  - Expressiveness: How much you express the emotions you feel (1-not very; 10-very).
  - General direction: Whether your emotions are usually more negative or more positive in your sport life (1-very negative; 10-very positive).
  - Control: How well you're able to maintain control of your emotions (1-little; 10-complete)



**Exercise 4.1:** Rate yourself on a 1-10 scale on the four aspects of your emotional life. How do these four emotional factors impact your sport positively or negatively?

---



---



---

### Negative Emotional Chain

- Link #1: Frustration.
  - Definition: path to your goal is blocked.
  - Motivates you to clear path, but usually tries same thing more and harder.

**Exercise 4.2:** What do you think and how does your body feel when you get frustrated, and how does that hurt your training and competitive effort?

---



---

- Link #2: Anger.
  - If you can't clear the path to your goals, frustration becomes anger.
  - Motivates you, but creates tension and prevents clear thinking and focus.
- Link #3: Despair.
  - You try and try and still can't clear the path.
  - Feeling out of control, helpless, and hopeless.
  - Emotion: despair.
  - Reaction: you give up.
  - Problem: as soon as you give you, you lose.
- Break the chain at frustration.
  - Step away from the cause of frustration (get physical and emotional distance).
  - Breathe and relax body.
  - Get perspective: be patient.
  - Identify cause of frustration.
  - Look for solution.
  - If no immediate solution, change goal or stop for the day.

**Exercise 4.3: What frustrates you in your sport, how do you react, and how can you stop or prevent your getting frustrated?**

---



---

## Fear

- Two primary fears: injury, failure.
- To find success, both injury and failure must be accepted as possibilities.
- Effects of fear on sport.
  - Mental: lowered motivation and confidence, distracted focus, cautious mindset.
  - Physical: tight muscles, short breathing, balance goes back, loss of coordination.
  - Performance: tentative, cautious, safe.

**Exercise 4.4: What fears hold you back in your sport and in what ways?**

---



---



## Emotional Mastery

- Not the avoidance or suppression of emotions.
- Being able to identify, understand, and express emotions in a healthy way.
- Control, let go of, or redirect your emotions.
- Become an emotional master.
  - Know your 'hot buttons.'
  - Create alternative reactions.
  - Choose to fight.
- Goal of emotions.
  - Experience them fully and deeply.
  - Master your emotions.
  - Use emotions to perform your best.

**Exercise 4.5:** What steps can you take to become an emotional master?

---



---

## CLASS #4: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

---

**Exercise #4.6:** Identify situations in which you get frustrated, then see if you can stop the negative emotional chain using the tools provided.

---



---

**Exercise #4.7:** Identify something you fear and try to understand and overcome it.

---



---

## CLASS #5: MENTAL TOOLS I

### Mental Tool #2: Sport imagery

- What is sport imagery?
  - Seeing and feeling yourself performing the way you want.
  - Reproducing the actual sport experience.
- Most powerful mental tool: Swiss Army knife of mental training.
- Why sport imagery?
  - Mental, technical, tactical benefits.
- Sport imagery is a tool you need to use regularly to master and gain the benefits from.



### Sport imagery Profile

**Directions:** Imagine yourself performing in your sport for 15 seconds. Then, rate yourself on the first five elements in the profile on the right using a 1-5 scale using the descriptions provided above. For Perspective, identify whether you are internal or external.

**Vividness** –How clear your imagery is. (1-blurry; 5-very clear)

**Control** – How well you’re able to control your images and perform the way you want without mistakes. (1-poor control, lots of mistakes; 5-total control, no mistakes)

**Feeling** –How well you’re able to experience the physical and emotional feelings of performance. (1-no feeling; 5-total feeling)

**Speed** – How well you’re able to imagine yourself performing in slow motion, at ‘fast-forward’ speed, and at normal speed. (1-can’t at all; 5-at all speeds)

**Total experience** – How well you’re able to reproduce the total experience of your sport (e.g., thoughts, emotions, physical sensations). (1-not at all; 5-total)

**Perspective** – Whether the ‘video camera’ is inside or outside of you. (1-inside; 3-use both; 5-outside)

### SPORT IMAGERY PROFILE

5						
4						
3						
2						
1						
0						
	Vividness	Control	Feeling	Speed	Total experience	Perspective

## Create a Sport Imagery Program

## Step #1: Sport Imagery Goals

SPORT IMAGERY GOAL PLAN			
<b>Directions:</b> In the space below, indicate the following: 1) the performance areas you want to work in your imagery; 2) the current status of the performance areas in your imagery, 3) your goal for the performance areas in your imagery, and 4) what mental tools you will incorporate into your imagery to achieve the goals.			
Performance Areas	Current Status	Goal	Mental Tools
<b>Technical/ Tactical</b>  1.  2.  3.			
<b>Mental</b>  1.  2.  3.			
<b>Performance</b>  1.  2.  3.			

**Step #2: Sport Imagery Ladder**

<b>SPORT IMAGERY LADDER</b>	
<b>Least Important</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Performing with a friend</li><li>2. Performing in training</li></ol>
<b>Moderately Important</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Practice competition</li><li>4. Low-level competition</li></ol>
<b>Most Important</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Major competition</li></ol>

Step #3: Sport Imagery Scenarios

SPORT IMAGERY SCENARIOS	
<p>Directions: To guide your imagery sessions: 1) follow the relaxation scenario below left, and 2) create your own imagery scenarios appropriate for your sport based on the guidelines offered on the right.</p>	
Relaxation Scenario	Training or Competitive Scenario
<p>Begin every imagery session, with a relaxation scenario. Research has shown that being in a relaxed state makes you more open to the positive images, thoughts, and feelings generated in imagery.</p> <p>As you progress through this relaxation scenario, begin each segment with a slow, deep breath.</p> <p>Imagine there are drain plugs on the bottom of your feet. When you open them, all the tension will drain out of your body and you will become very, very relaxed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take a slow, deep breath. Now, undo those plugs. Feel the tension begin to drain out of your body. Down from the top of your head, past your forehead, your face and neck; you're becoming more and more relaxed. The tension drains out of your jaw and down past your neck. Now your face and your neck are warm and relaxed and comfortable. Take a slow, deep breath.</li> <li>2. Take a slow, deep breath. The tension continues to drain out of your upper body, past your hands and forearms, and out of your upper arms and shoulders. Now your hands, arms and shoulders are warm and relaxed and comfortable. Take a slow, deep breath.</li> <li>3. Take a slow, deep breath. The tension continues to drain out of your upper body, past your chest and upper back, down past your stomach and lower back, and your upper body is becoming more and more relaxed. There is no more tension left in your upper body. Now your entire upper body is warm and relaxed and comfortable. Take a slow, deep breath.</li> <li>4. Take a slow, deep breath. The tension continues to drain out of your lower body, past your buttocks and down past your thighs, and your knees. Your lower body is becoming more and more relaxed. The tension drains out of your calves. There is almost no more tension left in your body and the last bit of tension drains past your ankles, the balls of your feet, and your toes.</li> <li>5. Do a brief survey of your body from head to toe to ensure that there is no more tension left in your body. Your entire body is warm and relaxed and comfortable.</li> <li>6. Replace the plugs so that no tension can get back in. Take a slow, deep breath. Feel the calm and relaxation envelop you. Enjoy that feeling and remember what it feels like to be completely relaxed.</li> </ol>	<p>Depending on the duration of a typical performance in your sport, you will either imagine 2-3 complete performances (e.g., 200m butterfly in swimming, 400m run in track &amp; field, floor routine in gymnastics) or 5-10 segments of a performance (e.g., shots in golf, at bats in baseball, plays in football, sections of a triathlon).</p> <p>Your imagery sessions should last approximately 10-15 minutes including relaxation, pre-performance routines, and imagined performances.</p> <p>For all sports, your imagery should follow this order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specify the training or competitive setting (e.g., location, level of competition) in which you will imagine yourself performing.</li> <li>2. Identify your goal (e.g., technical, tactical, mental, performance) for the imagery session and how you will accomplish it.</li> <li>3. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position in a quiet location.</li> <li>4. Close your eyes and begin the imagery session with some version of the relaxation scenario on the left side of this table.</li> <li>5. Imagine yourself following your pre-performance routine with an emphasis on: a) your physical warm-up, reaching your ideal intensity, and breathing, and b) getting yourself mentally prepared with a review of strategy or tactics, imagery within your imagery of successful performances, a focus on what will enable you to perform well, and positive self-talk.</li> <li>6. Imagine yourself just before the training or competitive performance making your final adjustments and ensuring you are totally physically and mentally prepared to perform your best.</li> <li>7. Imagine yourself performing your best in a training or competitive performance.</li> <li>8. Repeat.</li> <li>9. At the conclusion of your imagined performances, count down from 10 to 0, while breathing slowly and deeply, and leave the competitive venue and return to your imagery location.</li> <li>10. Record your imagery session using the Sport Imagery log that is provided.</li> </ol>

### Step #4: Sport Imagery Sessions

- Do imagery sessions 3x/week.
- Identify a time in your day in which you know you will be free.
- Set alerts in your phone so you don't forget.
- Find quiet, comfortable place.
- Lasts 10-15 mins.
- Do relaxation (5 deep breaths).
- Follow imagery scenarios.

### Step #5: Sport Imagery Log

Directions: Record your impressions of how the imagery session went.						
Date	Rung of Ladder	Imagery Quality: 1-poor; 10-great	Areas Worked On	Improvements Seen	Problems	Things to Work on Next Session

## Mental Tool #3: Routines

- Benefits of routines.
  - Routines totally prepare you to perform your best.
  - Train your mind and body to react the same way.
  - Create consistency, familiarity, predictability, and control.
  - No single routine is ideal for everyone.
- Components of a competition routine.
  - Night before: healthy meal, prepare equipment, pack gear, have fun, good night's sleep.
  - Morning of: do imagery, physical warm-up, healthy breakfast.
  - Physical and sport warm-up.
  - Review competition strategy.
  - Pre-competitive routine.

**Exercise 5.1:** Make a list of things you need to do the night before and the morning of the competition that will prepare you for the competition.

---



---

- Pre-competitive routine.
  - Equipment.
  - Intensity.
  - Focus.
  - Mindset.
- Location of routine: Around people or off by yourself?
- Order of routine: Decide what order you like best.
- Specifics of routine: What to include in your routine.

**Exercise 5.2:** Make a list of what you need to do when you arrive at the competition site, as well as the location and order, that will prepare you for competition. Using the information from Exercises 5.1 and 5.2, create a comprehensive competition routine using the form on page 24.

---



---

**Directions:** In the space below, create a competition routine that begins the night before, continues through the day of the competition, and concludes just before the start of the competition, using the information from Exercises 5.1 and 5.2.

	Night Before Competition	Day of Competition	Before Competition
Equipment			
Physical			
Mental			



## Mental Tool #4: Breathing

- Breathing is essential for life.
  - It is something we do without thought every moment of our lives.
  - As a result, we don't pay attention to it.
- It can also be used as a tool to be better prepared and to perform your best.
- Problems with not breathing.
  - Get tired.
  - Muscles tense.
  - Lose coordination.
  - Feel panicky.
- Value.
  - Gain, maintain, and regain focus.
  - Adjust intensity.
  - Create ideal mindset.
  - Use breathing to help the rhythm of your performance.
- Types of breathing.
  - Deep and slow.
  - Full and aggressive.
- Use of breathing.
  - As part of training and competitive routines.
  - During performances.
  - To recover after performances.
- Goal: Make breathing a tool and a habit.

**Exercise 5.3:** Stand up and, for 15 seconds, try the two types of breathing and see how each affects your body, thoughts, and emotions.

---



---

## Mental Tool #5: Trust

- What is trust?
  - Confidence in your capabilities.
  - View a situation without fear, doubt, or worry.
  - Faith that good things will happen.
  - Letting your body do what you've trained it to do.
- Who or what can you trust?
  - Abilities.
  - System (yours and your coach's).
  - Equipment.
  - Preparations.

- How to build trust.
  - Have a physical, technical, and mental program that you believe in.
  - Total preparation.
  - Make conscious commitment to trust.
  - Start to trust in simple environment, see the success, and continue to trust in increasingly more challenging situations.

**Exercise 5.4:** What prevents you from trusting yourself, why should you trust yourself, and how can you trust yourself more?

## CLASS #5: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

---

**Exercise #5.5:** Experiment with different types of breathing during training. Incorporate breathing as a tool into your training and competitive routines and to recover after training efforts.

**Exercise #5.6:** Identify areas in your training and competing where you can practice trusting yourself.

## CLASS #6: TIPS FROM THE TOP & WRAP-UP

---

### Tip from the Top #1: Pay now or pay later.

- You have a choice when you train.
  - Pay now in fatigue, pain, and boredom.
  - Pay later in disappointment and regret because you weren't as prepared as you could have been.
- Which hurts more?
  - Pain from training only lasts till the end of the workout.
  - Pain from disappointment and regret of failure can last forever.
- It's your choice: Pay now or pay later.

### Tip from the Top #2: Take a Leap of Faith

- There is no certainty in sport.
- After all of your preparations, you must be willing to just take a leap of faith.
- Where does a leap of faith come from?
  - Total preparation.
  - Confidence that you have done everything you can to succeed.
  - Removing the obstacles that prevent you from taking the leap of faith (e.g., fear of failure, doubts, worry).
- In the end, you must just be willing to take the leap of faith.
  - As Yoda said, "You do or you do not. There is no try."

### Tip from the Top #3: "F&# it!"

- "F&# it" attitude means not caring too much about results.
  - Lets go of fear of failure.
  - Removes expectations and pressure.
- It means being able to accept whatever happens if you take your shot and give your best effort.
  - Frees you from doubt, worry, fear.
  - Perform with confidence, courage, commitment.
  - Liberates you to perform your best when it counts most.

### Tip from the Top #4: Fun is a Mental Tool

- Fun is one of the most important mental tool you can use.
- Why is fun so beneficial?
  - Generates powerful positive emotions and physiology.
  - Counters negative emotions (e.g., frustration, anger).
  - Encourages you to stay in the moment.
  - Provides perspective by reminding you why you compete.
- Look for ways to make your sport fun.

## Experiencing Prime Sport

- What Prime Sport feels like.
  - Automatic and effortless: You don't need to *try* to perform your best.
  - Heightened senses: Every sense seems sharper.
  - Natural focus: Totally focused on performing your best; no distractions.
  - Boundless energy: No feelings of fatigue.
  - All is one: All aspects of your performances are working together.
- How to achieve Prime Sport.
  - Physical health: conditioning, rest, diet, injury/illness-free.
  - Best equipment ideally prepared.
  - Having necessary technical and tactical skills to perform your best.
  - Totally mentally prepared.

**Exercise 6.1:** Have you ever experienced Prime Sport and, if so, recall that time and make a list of what you did that enabled it to happen.

## Three Goals for Competition-day Success

- Goal #1 (before the competition): "I'm as prepared as I can be to perform my best."
- Goal #2 (during the competition): Bring it!
- Goal #3 (after the competition): No regrets because I left everything out there.

## Seven Reasons Why Athletes Don't Do Mental Training

- You don't care enough about your sport.
- You don't believe mental training works.
- There's no program to follow.
- It's not a habit or part of your routine.
- It's boring and repetitive.
- Not supported by coaches and parents.
- It's weird (and you don't want to stand out from their peers).

**Exercise 6.2:** What is preventing you from committing to mental training and what can you do to make that commitment?

## How to Own Your Mind

- One hour a week of Prime Sport 101 for 6 weeks isn't enough to own your mind.
  - This course only gives you the information and tools to own your mind.
  - You must make mental training a part of your overall training program.
- Examples of owning your mind.
  - Sport imagery.
  - Routines.
  - Doing exercises to develop your mental muscles.
- When you decide to own your mind, then you will be ready to become the best athlete you can be.

**Exercise 6.3:** What aspects of your sport do you need to gain more ownership of?

---



---

## CLASS #6: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

---

### Exercise 6.4: Prime Sport 101 Mental Training Program

- Use the Prime Sport 101 mental training program below.
- **Step #1: Identify Mental Areas**
  - Retake the Prime Sport profile and identify three mental areas you want to work on.
- **Step #2: Set Mental Training Goals**
  - Mental areas, current status, goals, tools.
- **Step #3: Create a Mental Training Schedule**
  - Write down where and when you will do your mental training.
- **Step #4: Create Alerts in Your Phone**
  - Alerts remind you until your mental training becomes a habit.
- **Step #5: Put Mental Training Program into Action**
  - Commit to your mental training program in the same way you commit to your conditioning and sport training.

## Mental Tools

### Motivation Tools

- Set goals.
- Focus on your long-term goals.
- Train smart: Have a training program that includes variety, plenty of rest, and allows balance in your life.
- Have a training partner or group who can push you.
- Use motivational cues: words, phrases, photographs.
- Identify your greatest competitor. Ask if you're working hard enough to beat him/her.
- Ask two daily questions: Morning: "What can I do today to become the best athlete I can be?"; Evening: "Did I do everything possible today to become the best athlete I can be?"

### Confidence Tools

- Preparation.
- Mental toolbox.
- Adversity.
- Support from others.
- Success.
- Positive self-talk.
- Fire-up negative thinking.

### Intensity Tools

- Psych-up: move your body, intense breathing, high-energy self-talk and body language.
- Psych-down: calming self-talk, deep breathing, muscle relaxation, slow pace.
- Mental imagery.
- Talk to friends.
- Listen to fire-up or chill-out music.
- Smile!

### Focus Tools

- Have clear goals and process.
- Identify and limit distractions.
- Mental imagery.
- Breathing.
- Routines.
- Messages on equipment.
- 3 Ps: positive, process, present.

### Mindset Tools

- Self-talk.
- Breathing.
- Imagery.

### Emotional Tools

- Frustration.
  - Step away from cause of frustration (get physical and emotional distance).
  - Breathe and relax body.
  - Get perspective: be patient.
  - Identify cause of frustration.
  - Look for solution.
- Emotional mastery.
  - Know your 'hot buttons.'
  - Create healthy alternative reactions.

### Imagery Tools

- Create off-sport imagery program.
  - Goals: what you want to work on in your sessions.
  - Ladder: a progression of training and competitive situations you will imagine.
  - Training/Competition-specific: Choose a venue, event, and either a training situation or a specific competition you'll be in this season.
  - Scenarios: narratives that will guide you through each session.
- Imagery sessions.
  - Do imagery sessions 3x/week.
  - Identify a specific time in your day (10-15 mins.).
  - Set alerts in your phone so you don't forget.
  - Find quiet, comfortable place.
  - Follow imagery scenarios.

### Routine Tools

- Create a routine that begins the night before.
- Create final routine that begins when you arrive at the competition.
  - Key areas.
  - Equipment.
  - Physical.
  - Mental.
  - Location of routine.
  - Specifics of routine.
  - Order of routine.

### Breathing Tools

- Types of breathing.
  - Deep and slow.
  - Aggressive.
- Breathing as a tool.
  - As part of training and competitive routines.
  - During performances.
  - To recover after performances.

### Trust Tools

- Have a physical, technical, and mental program that you believe in.
- Total preparation.
- Make conscious commitment to trust.

## Prime Sport goal plan

**Directions:** In the space below, indicate the following: 1) the mental areas on which you need to work in the different settings; 2) the current status of the mental areas, 3) your goal for the mental areas, and 4) what mental tools you will use to accomplish the goal.

Setting	Mental Area	Current Status	Goal	Mental Tools
<b>Off-sport</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				
<b>In-sport</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				
<b>Day of competition</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				

## Prime Sport mental training schedule

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Location	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Morning</b>	Off-sport							
	In-sport							
<b>Afternoon</b>	Off-sport							
	In-sport							
<b>Evening</b>	Off-sport							





For more information:

Tel: 415.322.8425

Email: [jim@drjimtaylor.com](mailto:jim@drjimtaylor.com)

Website: [www.drjimtaylor.com](http://www.drjimtaylor.com)

**Disclaimer:** The appearance of the athletes in this workbook does not indicate a professional relationship with or endorsement of Dr. Jim Taylor.

Copyright © 2017 Jim Taylor, Ph.D. This document may not be duplicated or distributed in any form without the written authorization of Dr. Jim Taylor.