



***PRIME SKI RACING 101:***  
***Train Your Mind like a Champion***  
**Mental Training Workbook**  
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## CLASS #1: INTRODUCTION

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### Prime Ski Racing

- Prime Ski Racing: Skiing *consistently fast* under the most *challenging* conditions.
- Prime Ski Racing is about strengthening mental muscles and creating a mental toolbox.
- What race are you competing in?
  - Race against your competitors.
  - Race against the conditions (i.e., course, terrain, snow conditions, weather).
  - Mental race.
  - You must first win the mental race!
- What are you preparing for? Prime Time!
  - Most challenging conditions.
  - Toughest competitors.
  - Biggest race of your life.
- Your mind: tool or weapon?
  - Weapon: overthinking, worry, anxiety, negativity.
  - Tool: motivated, confident, focused.
  - Goal: create mental toolbox that helps you use your mind as a tool.
- My approach to mental training.
  - Just like conditioning and on-snow training.
  - Comprehensive, structured, consistent.
- Own your mind.
  - You must own every aspect of your ski racing: conditioning, on-snow, equipment, mind, sleep, diet, relationships, school.
  - Are you fully owning your mind?
  - Prime Ski Racing 101 gives you the information and tools to own your mind.
  - You must make mental training a part of your overall training program.

## Prime Ski Racing Profile

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

**Confidence** – How strongly you believe in your ability to ski your fastest and achieve your ski racing 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 race performances. (1-hurts, too low or too high; 10-helps, just right)

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

**Mindset** – Whether what goes through your mind in the 30-60 seconds before your race run helps or hurts you. (1-hurts; 10-helps)

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

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

**Imagery** – How much you use imagery off-snow, in on-snow training, and at races. (1-never; 10-consistently off-snow and on-snow)

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

**Trust** – In the start gate, 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 Ski Racing** – How often you experience Prime Ski Racing (skiing consistently fast under the most challenging conditions). (1-never; 10-often)

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Twelve mental muscles and tools that impact ski racing 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 each racer to reality test racers' perceptions of themselves.

PRIME SKI RACING PROFILE											
10											
9											
8											
7											
6											
5											
4											
3											
2											
1											
0											
	Motivation	Confidence	Intensity	Focus	Mindset	Emotions	Imagery	Routines	Breathing	Trust	Prime Ski Racing Commitment

## CLASS #1: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

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

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

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**Exercise #1.3:** Detail how the mental areas you identified cause you problems in your skiing.

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**Exercise #1.4:** Describe how you would like to be in these mental areas in your skiing.

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## CLASS #2: MENTAL MUSCLES I

### Mental Muscle #1: Motivation

- Motivation: The determination to do what is necessary to achieve your ski racing 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 ski racing your #1 priority.
  - Making choices that will help you reach your ski racing goals.
- Key aspects of motivation.
  - Motivation influences every aspect of your life including physical conditioning, on-snow training, equipment preparation, mental preparation, sleep, nutrition, school, social life.
  - Motivation is the only contributor to ski racing that you can control.
  - Effort vs. goals: Your effort must be consistent with your high goals.
  - The Grind: When it gets hard is when you must bear down and push through.
- Causes of low motivation.
  - Unclear process 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.

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- 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 racer I can be?"; Evening: "Did I do everything possible today to become the best racer I can be?"
  - Motivation must come from within: identify the deep reasons why you race.

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

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## Commitment

- Commitment is essential to achieving your athletic goals.
  - It's one thing to say you are committed to your ski racing 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 ski racing goals.
- Recognize when you are faced with those forks in the road and take the good road toward your ski racing dreams.

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

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## Mental Muscle #2: Confidence

- How strongly you believe in your ability to ski your fastest 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 skiing.

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

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## Confidence Tools

- Preparation: Knowing that you've done everything you can to ski your fastest.
- 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 races.
- Self-talk: What you say to yourself matters.

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

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## CLASS #2: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

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

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

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

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## CLASS #3: MENTAL MUSCLES II

### Mental Muscle #3: Intensity

- Definition: Amount of physiological activity you feel before and during training and races.
- Range of intensity: Really relaxed to really intense.
- We are physical beings: Without physical readiness, fast skiing isn't possible.
- Goals.
  - Identify your ideal intensity.
  - Monitor and adjust intensity.
  - Reach ideal intensity most training runs and every race run.
- Symptoms of overintensity.
  - Racing heart.
  - Short breaths.
  - Adrenaline rushing through your body.
  - Tense muscles.
  - Loss of coordination.
- Causes of overintensity.
  - Expectations from yourself and others.
  - Pressure from parents, coaches, and others.
  - Too much focus on results.
  - Comparing yourself to others.
  - Fear of failure.
  - Fear of injury.



**Exercise 3.1:** What causes and symptoms of overintensity do you experience in your ski racing?

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## Identifying Your Prime Intensity

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

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

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## Intensity Tools

- Good physical, technical, and mental preparation before training or races.
- 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 racing 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 races and describe how you will incorporate them into your skiing.

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## Mental Muscle #4: Focus

- Definition: Focusing on things that help you ski fast and blocking out distractions that prevent you from skiing 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 ski racing?

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## 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 races?

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## Mental Muscle #5: Mindset

- Definition: What is going through your head in the start just before your race run.
- 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 skiing aggressively and fast.
- 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 skiing relaxed.
- Clear mindset.
  - Nothing related to the race 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 races and do you think it is best?

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## Mindset Tools

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

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

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## CLASS #3: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

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

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

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

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## CLASS #4: MENTAL TOOLS I

### Mental Tool #1: Emotions

- Emotions are the foundation for your life and your ski racing.
  - Give your life texture and depth.
  - Propel you in your ski racing.
  - Essential piece of the Prime Ski Racing 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 ski racing 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 ski racing positively or negatively?

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## 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 race efforts?

- 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 up, you lose.
- Break the chain at 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.
  - If no immediate solution, change goal or stop for the day.

**Exercise 4.3:** What frustrates you in your ski racing, 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 ski racing.
  - 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 ski racing 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 ski your fastest.

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

## CLASS #4: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

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

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

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## CLASS #5: MENTAL TOOLS I

### Mental Tool #2: Race Imagery

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



### Race Imagery Profile

**Directions:** Imagine yourself running a course 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 ski 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 skiing. (1-no feeling; 5-total feeling)

**Speed** – How well you're able to imagine yourself skiing 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 ski racing (e.g., thoughts, emotions, physical sensations). (1-not at all; 5-total)

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

## Create a Race Imagery Program

### Step #1: Race Imagery Goals

<b>Directions:</b> In the space below, indicate the following: 1) The areas you want to improve in your imagery; 2) The current status of the areas you want to work on; 3) Your goal for the areas you want to improve; and 4) What mental tools you will incorporate into your imagery to achieve the goal.			
Areas to Work On	Current Status	Goal	Mental Tools
<b>Technical/Tactical (ex. stance, line)</b> 1. 2. 3.			
<b>Mental (ex. intensity, mindset)</b> 1. 2. 3.			
<b>Performance (ex. speed, consistency)</b> 1. 2. 3.			

## Step #2: Race Imagery Ladder

**Directions:** Begin your race imagery program at the lowest rung of the imagery ladder (either free skiing or gate training depending on what you are working on). Stay at the first rung of the ladder until you accomplish your imagery goal. Then, move up to the next rung, achieve your imagery goal at that rung, and continue up to the top rung of the imagery ladder where you achieve your imagery goal and ski your best in a major race.

### Least Important

1. Free skiing
2. Gate training

### Moderately Important

3. Timed training runs
4. Low-level race

### Most Important

5. Major race



## Step #3: Race Imagery Scenarios

**Directions:** To guide your imagery sessions, you can: 1) use the mp3 files on the members-only site, 2) memorize, record, or modify the below training and race imagery scenarios, or 3) create your own imagery scenarios. For every imagery session, choose a specific hill, event, and either a training situation or race you will be in this coming season.

Training Scenario	Race Scenario
<p>You are in the start area before your first training run. You have a few racers to go before your run. It's time to get yourself totally prepared to ski your best.</p> <p>Begin your training routine. First, get your equipment ready. Buckle your boots, adjust your gear. Take some deep breaths. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Your equipment is now totally prepared to ski your best.</p> <p>It's now time to get yourself physically ready. Stretch out, warm-up your body, check and adjust your intensity. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take a deep breath. Your body is now totally ready to ski your best.</p> <p>Two racers to go before your training run. It's time to get yourself mentally ready. Focus on what you want to work on this run. Close your eyes and imagine yourself skiing the way you want to. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take some deep breaths. You are completely prepared to ski your best on this run.</p> <p>In the gate, totally focused on skiing your best. Poles over the wand. Take two deep breaths...GO. <i>[pause 45-90 seconds depending on the event]</i></p> <p>At the bottom of the training course. Now, replay your run if you had a good run to ingrain the positive images and feelings. Replay and edit your run if you made some mistakes, correcting the mistakes, pushing out the negative images and feelings and replacing them with positive images and feelings.</p> <p>Now it's time to head back up for your next run.</p> <p>On the ride up the lift, close your eyes and imagine yourself skiing the way you want on your next training run.</p> <p><i>[repeat or each imagined training run]</i></p>	<p>Go out to the race hill. You're near the finish area about 30 minutes before your start. You've had a great week of training. You're skiing really well. You've inspected the course and know it well. You've taken your warm-up runs. You feel strong and fast. You will have a great race today.</p> <p>It's time to go up for your run. Get on the lift and make your way to the top. On the ride up, close your eyes, take several deep breaths, and see and feel yourself skiing strong and fast in your race run.</p> <p>Off at the top of the lift, ski down to the start area, making fast, aggressive turns. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Arriving at the start area, it's time to get yourself totally prepared to ski your best.</p> <p>First, get your equipment ready, armor, skis, bindings. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take several deep breaths. Your equipment is now totally prepared for you to ski your very fastest.</p> <p>Now get yourself physically ready. Warm-up, stretch out, check and adjust your intensity. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take several deep breaths. Your body is now totally prepared for you to ski your very fastest.</p> <p>Five racers to go. Strip down, make your final adjustments, and buckle your boots. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take several deep breaths.</p> <p>Three racers to go. Time to get yourself mentally ready. Check and adjust your intensity. Imagine yourself skiing key parts of the course. <i>[pause 15 seconds]</i> Take several deep breaths.</p> <p>Time to go into race mode, totally focused on one thing: skiing as fast as you can. You will have a great race today.</p> <p>The starter calls you into the gate. Slide your skis back and forth. Keep breathing. Poles over the wand. Five seconds. Ready...GO. <i>[Pause 45 seconds, SL; 65, GS; 75 SG; 90 DH]</i></p> <p>In the finish area. Look back up the hill and review your run with race imagery. Now, replay your run if you had a good run to ingrain the positive images and feelings. Replay and edit your run if you made some mistakes, correcting the mistakes, pushing out the negative images and feelings and replacing them with positive images and feelings.</p> <p>I'm going to count down from 10 to 0. During that time, leave the hill and return to this room. But all of the positive thoughts, positive images, and positive feelings will stay with you, so you can bring them out the next time you race.</p> <p><i>[repeat for two-run events]</i></p>

## Step #4: Race 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: Race 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 ski 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 race routine.
  - Night before: healthy meal, tune skis, pack gear, have fun, good night's sleep.
  - Wake up: do imagery, physical warm-up, healthy breakfast.
  - Physical and skiing warm-up.
  - Inspection.
  - Start-area routine.

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

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- Start 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 in the start area, as well as the location and order, that will prepare you for your race run. Using the information from Exercises 5.1 and 5.2, create a comprehensive race routine using the form on page 22.

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**Directions:** In the space below, create a race routine that begins the night before, continues through the morning of the race, and concludes in the start area, 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 ski fast.
- 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 turns.
- Types of breathing.
  - Deep and slow.
  - Full and aggressive.
- Use of breathing.
  - As part of training and race routines.
  - During runs.
  - To recover after runs.
- 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.

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## 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

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**Exercise #5.5:** Develop and commit to a comprehensive off-snow race imagery program.

**Exercise #5.6:** Experiment with different types of breathing in your free skiing and then in gate training. Incorporate breathing as a tool into your training and race routines and to recover after training runs.

**Exercise #5.7:** Identify areas in your training and racing where you can practice trusting yourself.

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## CLASS #6: WORLD CUP TIPS & WRAP-UP

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### World Cup Tip #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.

### World Cup Tip #2: Take a Leap of Faith

- There is no certainty in ski racing.
- 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."

### World Cup Tip #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.
  - Ski with confidence, courage, commitment.
  - Liberates you to ski your fastest when it counts most.

### World Cup Tip #4: Fun is a Mental Tool

- Fun is one of the most important mental tool you can develop.
- 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 ski race.
- Look for ways to make your ski racing fun.

## Experiencing Prime Ski Racing

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

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

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## Three Goals for Race-day Success

- Goal #1 (in the starting gate): "I'm as prepared as I can be to ski my fastest."
- Goal #2 (on course): Bring it!
- Goal #3 (in the finish): No regrets because I left everything out on the course.

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

- You don't care enough about your ski racing.
- 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?

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## How to Own Your Mind

- One hour a week of Prime Ski Racing 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.
  - Off-snow imagery.
  - On-snow routines.
  - Doing exercises to develop your mental muscles.
- When you decide to own your mind, then you will be ready to become the best ski racer you can be.

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

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## CLASS #6: MENTAL TRAINING EXERCISES

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### Exercise 6.4: Prime Ski Racing 101 Mental Training Program

- Use the Prime Ski Racing 101 mental training program below.
- **Step #1: Identify Mental Areas**
  - Retake the Prime Ski Racing 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 on-snow 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 racer I can be?"; Evening: "Did I do everything possible today to become the best racer 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-snow imagery program.
  - Goals: what you want to work on in your sessions.
  - Ladder: a progression of training and race situations you will imagine.
  - Training/Race-specific: Choose a hill, event, and either a training situation or a specific race you'll be in this season.
  - Scenarios: narratives that will guide you through each session (use mp3s you can download from the members-only page or generate your own).
- Imagery sessions.
  - Do imagery sessions 3x/week.
  - Identify a 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 race routine that begins the night before.
- Create start routine that begins when you arrive at the start area.
  - 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 race routines.
  - During runs.
  - To recover after runs.

### Trust Tools

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

## Prime Ski Racing 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 Areas	Current Status	Goal	Mental Tools
Off-snow	1. 2. 3.			
On-snow	1. 2. 3.			
Race Day	1. 2. 3.			

# Prime Ski Racing mental training schedule

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

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

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

Time	Location	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	Off-snow							
	On-snow							
Afternoon	Off-snow							
	On-snow							
Evening	Off-snow							



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

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