

FOREVER ACTIVE

PERSONALIZED FITNESS AND WELLNESS FOR MEN 50+

Developing a Champions Mind

Introduction

Life is not always easy as we get older. Often health, financial, social and family issues raise their ugly heads and force us to make difficult and sometimes undesirable decisions. These situations affect us emotionally and physically. They force us to be mentally strong and unfortunately, we are not always up to the challenge.

However there are mental skills that can be developed and strategies utilized that can help ensure that you develop a “Champions

Mind.” This mind set is similar to that used by Olympic and world champion athletes to prepare them as best as possible for expected and, most importantly, unexpected challenges. The same approach can work well for all of in our daily lives.

Fortunately, you don’t have to invent the wheel; the wheel already exists in you. Your DAILY goal is to seek and exploit the fullest expression of your POSITIVE aspects and attributes. Use others to assist you along this path. Who specially do you respect the most and what are their strongest attributes that you admire most? Integrity, confidence, discipline, commitment, happiness? If you identified those traits in others, then they also exist in you. All people are more alike than different, so we are all capable of the positive, powerful and productive traits we see in others.

To unleash the Champion Mind there exists twenty fundamental concepts. Study them, practice them one at a time and you will reap great success, happiness and maybe even a gold medal.



Did you Know

Twenty Skills and Strategies to Develop a Champion’s Mind

1. Take Ownership
2. Develop Good Communication and People Skills
3. Set Goals for Everything
4. Always use Mental Imagery
5. Self Talk is Priceless
6. Confidence– Fake it until you Have it
7. Be in the Moment, that is all you can Control
8. Breath Control to Control Anxiety
9. Always find Humour and Enjoyment in the Moment
10. Good Positive Body Language Speaks a Thousand Words
11. Find your Intensity Zone and Stay There
12. Use Positive Affirmations and Powerful Phrases
13. Play to Win and never to Lose
14. Love the Grind
15. True Happiness comes from Within
16. Practice Self-Compassion: Accept yourself Unconditionally
17. Never Stop Learning
18. Be Grateful
19. Have a Game Plan for Everything you Do.
20. Avoid Mental Errors

Reference: **The Champions Mind**

By: **Jim Afremow**

Twenty Skills and Strategies you Need for a Champion's Mind

1. Take Ownership of Everything you Do

The attitude with which you approach life's challenges will determine your ability to handle them in a positive productive manner. You must take ownership of this attitude.

The first and most important step in developing a champion's mind, a mind that can take you to places you never thought possible, is to taking ownership for all your thoughts, words and actions. Nobody but yourself is responsible for these. When things go wrong, it requires great humility and courage to take on this responsibility but is absolutely necessary for learning, growing and improving as an individual.



2. Develop Great Communication and People Skills

Communication is the response you get

We do not live in isolation. It is impossible to have a champion's mind and to live a successful and happy life without being able to effectively socialize and communicate with family, friends and business associates. Our ability to listen and effectively and safely communicate our thoughts is imperative to developing and growing relationships. Effective socialization is important for our confidence and self esteem.

3. Set Goals for Everything you Do

It is important to know what your goals are and keep them in focus. A good rule of thumb is to "Think it, then ink it." Writing down **S.M.A.R.T.** goals is the best way to do this.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Specific - Be as specific as possible. The more specific you are the better you can visualize the result.

Measurable - If you can't measure it, you can't do it. Identify specific metrics to measure your progress and achievements.

Action - What are the specific actions are you going to take to achieve your goals? Be specific.

Realistic - It is important that the goal you set can be realistically accomplished based on the resources, time and effort you can commit to. If not, frustration, disillusionment and failure will result. List how your goal is realistic.

Timed Lined - Set a specific time (a week, a month, a year) to accomplish your goal. Set a long-term and short-term time line so you can measure your progress.

4. Mental Imagery; Visualize what you want to accomplish

Visualize to actualize. See yourself being successful/happy, feel yourself successful/happy and then enjoy being successful/happy. Athletes do this all the time. They visualize the basketball going through the hoop before they shoot. A race car driver visualizes the turn before he makes it. An actor visualizes themselves performing a role before the camera rolls or the curtain goes up. If you want to make it happen you have got to be able to see yourself doing it first.

A blue rectangular box with white text. The text reads: "VISUALIZE this thing that you want. See it, feel it, believe in it. Make your mental blue print, and begin to build." The word "VISUALIZE" is in a larger, bold font.

5. Self-Talk

Learn to think more positively about your self. Gain clear control of your thinking process and give yourself self-compassion. Mentally beating on yourself is not productive. Behaviour research has shown that motivational self talk is much more effective in getting positive results. Than focusing on the negative .

6. Confidence



Everyone has failures, but the successful do not dwell on them. Failures are part of the past so why focus on them? Instead, take the positive approach that Babe Ruth was famously known for, "Every strike out brings me closer to the next home run." Think about three things that you have successfully accomplished and how they can propel you to further accomplishments.

7. Focus on the Present

Focus means simplifying your thoughts and screening out useless information. Being present in the moment empowers you to respond to your changing environment and challenges that are confronting you at the present moment. Remember, the past and future exist only in your imagination.



8. Breath Control

Anxiety shows its ugly face through shallow rapid breathing. Regardless of inhalation length, prolong exhalation to promote relaxation.

9. Humour and Enjoyment is the Best Medicine



Enjoying the challenge ahead and finding humour in difficult situations is often the best way to reduce unnecessary stress. A very valuable technique to use when you are confronting a challenging situation is to slow things down by telling yourself that you don't want this to end, that you don't want the situation to end suddenly. By doing this you start to gain control of the situation rather than the situation of controlling and dominating you.

10. Good Positive Body Language speaks a thousand words

Your posture, gestures, facial expressions and eye movements reveals thoughts and feelings. Positive and upbeat body language includes smiling, chin up, shoulders back and chest out, standing tall and walking strong. These types of body gestures reveal confidence.

11. Find your Intensity Zone

Everyone has their own optimal intensity level for peak performance in any given situation. Sometimes you need to increase your intensity level and at other times throttle down your intensity level. Taking forceful breaths, (powerful hand movements), repeating energizing thoughts like "yes I can" and recalling up-tempo songs are all ways to increase your intensity. Conversely, breathing slowly with long exhalations, doing passive stretches, thinking calming thoughts and replaying calming songs helps tone down the intensity level. Stay in the present, stay emotionally under control and manage your intensity level to meet the demands of the situation. Usually, the more complex and skillful the task, the lower you want your intensity level to be. Think of kicking a field goal in football (low intensity needed) vs running back a kick off (high Intensity needed).

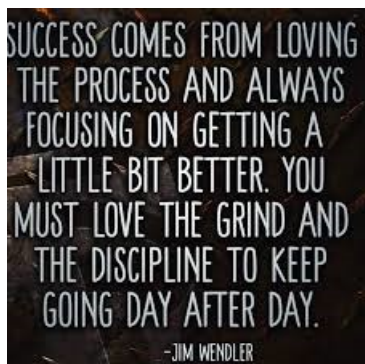


12. Positive Affirmations and Powerful Phrases

The more often you repeat positive affirmations and powerful phrases with conviction, the more concrete they will become in your mind and affect your performance. Because we live and perform in the present time and not in the future, speak in the present tense rather than future tense. In other words, "I am, I have, I bring " vs "I will."

13. Play to Win, Not to Avoid Losing

Playing to win is based in confidence, playing not to lose is rooted in fear. Don't limit yourself to small goals and don't be discouraged after delivering an unsuccessful performance. Don't think of failures as end points but transform them into new beginnings. Keep pushing towards your goals. Celebrate and keep successes fresh in your mind and NEVER under value your successes.

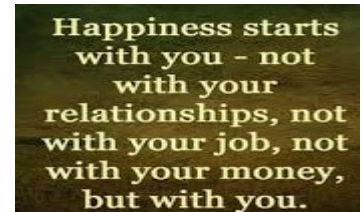


14. Love the Grind

Rarely, from one day to another, are we on our "A" game. It is impossible and unrealistic to expect us to perform at our best all the time. As a result, it is imperative that we figure out how to "close the deal" on each given day. On these days that you are not at your best, focus all your energy on execution not self-analysis. The mental challenge is to focus your performance on what you want to accomplish not on how it is getting done. Be willing to adapt and problem-solve when the unexpected happens. Winning "ugly" is always better than not winning at all. People only remember the end result, not how they got there.

15. True Happiness comes from Within

Always make participating in and enjoying the activity of living itself your biggest reward. Happiness is a peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.



Happiness starts with you - not with your relationships, not with your job, not with your money, but with you.

16. Practice Self-Compassion: Accept Yourself Unconditionally

"Self-compassion is simply giving the same kindness to ourselves that we would give to others."

You are more than a performance outcome. Never identify yourself singularly because you are so much more than a single entity. You are a sum of your life experiences. Focus on the ones that are positive, for those are the ones that you want to be the foundation upon which you build your tomorrows. Having unconditional self-acceptance will help you move toward your goals. The mantra, "do your best and forget the rest" is a good one to repeat to yourself when things have not

worked out as you had expected regardless of the effort you put forward.

17. Never Stop Learning

Embrace the Zen idea of "always a student." Your willingness to learn and evolve is invaluable when it comes to attaining personal excellence. Achieve more success and happiness by understanding that you can make progress in every area of your life.

Learn to emotionally detach from things that cannot be changed, rather than getting distracted by them. Repeat the saying, "It is what it is." Be willing to move on when things are not under your control. Learn to move and adapt, never stop learning!

18. Be Grateful

Expressing gratitude is not showing weakness but showing strength of character. The Greek philosopher Plato wrote, "A grateful mind is a great mind which eventually attracts to itself great things." Being thankful is one of the strengths most strongly correlated with well-being.

Reflect daily on things in your life that you can be thankful for. Did you thank those who are responsible for them? Keep a "Gratitude Journal" that you can refer to when you are being negatively challenged. It can be an effective mood-enhancer. It will help you realize all the good things that are happening in your life and that this current challenge is temporary.



YOU + GRATITUDE = HAPPYNESS

19. Game Plan



YOU MUST HAVE A GAME PLAN. IF YOU AIM AT NOTHING, YOU WILL HIT IT EVERY TIME.

It is important to have a pre-performance mental game plan that allows you to handle any stressful situation in a more productive way. By creating a pre-performance readiness routine, you will always be in full control and able to handle any unpredictable event that may arise more effectively.

A pre-performance routine is a simple and dependable routine that you follow regularly. It provides reassurance and predictability that helps alleviate stress, nervousness, excitement and irritability. Pro athletes use them all the time. Watch a pro baseball player's mannerisms before he goes to bat and between pitches. Or a pro basketball player before he shoots a free throw. They do the same thing each time. It is a way for them to calm their nerves and focus their minds on the task at hand. It provides a shield from distractions.

Developing a pre-performance routine involves reflecting on past experiences. How did you feel emotionally when you were in similar situations? What were your mental and emotional tendencies? How well did you manage those tendencies? What could you have done better to produce the desired results? Develop your own pre-performance routine based on these reflections. The following strategies are key.

1. Focus on and get control of your breathing. This is a great way of managing your emotions. If you find you are having difficulty getting control mentally, take a time out.
2. Step away from the situation for a few minutes, a day or a week. It is important to feel in control so you can do your best. If you need more time to do this, take it.
3. Simplify the situation and focus only on things that you can control.

20. Avoid Mental Errors

You can self destruct before you even deal with a stressful situation by allowing mental errors to enter your consciousness.

Three BIG mental errors you MUST avoid are;

1. Overemphasizing the outcome. This will paralyze you mentally. Stay in the present moment. That is the only period of time you can control. Focus on the process and the result will take care of themselves.

2. Trying too hard. This will exhaust you mentally. Think of consistency as your goal. Find the emotional level you need to be at to deal with the task at hand and try not to wavier from that regardless of what unexpected events may present themselves. Stick to what you know has made you successful. Follow your pre-performance routine. Trust your preparation, trust your skills.

3. Avoid focusing on the negative. This will weaken you mentally. Demanding perfection is unrealistic. There is always margin for error. Practice self -compassion. Treat yourself like you would treat your best friend if things don't go as planned. You would most likely tell them, "Don't worry about it, move on." Remember, things will pass.

Thoughts determine feelings and feelings influence performance. Stay positive for positive results.



Summary

Developing a Champion's Mind for Success and Happiness Is a Marathon

"The toughest thing about success is that you have got to keep being a success."

Developing a Champion's Mind and maintaining mental strength through adversity is a marathon, a life long endeavour. There is no let up. New challenges will present themselves on a daily basis. You need to keep committing yourself to meet these challenges with a Champion's Mind.

Success and happiness are not random acts. They are earned through tenaciously implementing what has been outlined .

Be totally committed to the effort necessary to develop a champion's mind and become the best you possibly can be. There are only two options regarding commitment: you are either in or you are out. Choosing to be committed is easy, sustaining the effort under adverse conditions is the challenge. The techniques described previously will help you sustain your effort.

A good mantra to repeat mentally is, "Today I will do what other won't, so tomorrow I can accomplish what others can't."

The ultimate goal is to reach within yourself to be and achieve your best. When you do that you possess dignity, carry pride and developed character no matter what the end result may be. Real victory is living each day with no regrets. If you do this you can accept the consequences.

Remember, only YOU can control your attitude and effort. There is a great Buddhist teaching:

"It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand battles. When you conquer yourself the victory is yours. It can not be taken from you, not by angels or demons, heaven or hell."

Have the boldness to pursue what you want most in life. Uncover the potential of your life because with a Champion's Mind, nothing can hold you back.

Embrace the journey