



TABLE OF CONTENTS

IT'S UP TO YOU.....	4
THE MENTAL TOOLBOX	6
THE COMPUTER	7
THE AUTOPILOT	14
THE SELF-IMAGE.....	26
THE IMAGINATION	35
RULES OF THE MIND	42
ABOUT IMAGERY	45
PRELIMINARY EXERCISES.....	46
ABOUT JOEY-O.....	50
TO BETTER GOLF	52
RELAXATION	62
TRY THIS EXPERIMENT	64
CONCLUSION	68

Why People Behave The Way They Do.

To understand what is written on the following pages you do not have to be a student of human behavior. All you need is a basic understanding of it and be able to fully understand the written word. I am not a psychologist. I only know and see what I observe. And I have been a life-long “student” of human behavior. Read this document slowly. Be sure you understand every part of it clearly. It is not as profound and complicated as it is insightful. You may have read material similar to this before. You may have even understood it. However, I doubt it. I am going to OPEN YOUR MIND and illuminate this truth so that you will never forget it.

It doesn't take a genius to understand what is written here, but once you understand it, the way you golf will be changed for the better for the rest of you life.

Let's take it one step at a time. I'll provide many examples as we move along to help drive home the more important points.

On a sunny afternoon, a single white golf ball soars across the sky and comes to rest on the fairway. Another ball follows, almost identically, then another, and yet another! All follow the same flowing arc and land within plus or minus three yards from the center of the fairway 300 yards away. What amazing golfer is capable of driving with such unerring precision? It's Iron Byron.

Iron Byron is actually a mechanical machine used by the United States Golf Association to test golf equipment. Under consistent weather conditions, it can swing a club and consistently drive a golf ball 300 yards to within plus or minus three yards from the center of the fairway. Once the machine is set to strike the ball, it performs the action flawlessly every time.

On a sunny afternoon, another single white golf ball soars across the sky and lands on the green of a 155-yard par-3 hole. Taking a couple of bounces, it rolls five or 6 feet and finally stops . . . at the bottom of the cup: A hole-in-one for Worth Dalton, a 52-year-old blind man from Orlando Florida.

Do you know what the similarities are between Worth Dalton and Iron Byron? They are both sightless. Iron is sightless because it a mechanical machine. Worth

Dalton has been sightless since 1980. He suffers from retinitis pigmentosa, a hereditary eye disease that slowly steals its victims' sight. They both perform the same function of striking the ball without any concern about where it will land, or being distracted by fairway hazards or any other mental roadblocks keeping them from performing their job of striking the ball.

Your goal as a golfer should be to automatically strike the ball like Iron Byron. The more you develop the ability to focus on automatically striking the ball, instead of where your ball will land after striking it, the more your performance will improve.

On a sunny afternoon, a single white golf ball soars across the sky and comes to rest on the fairway – in comfortable range of the center. The next drive yields the same satisfying result, as does the drive following that one. What amazing golfer is capable of striking with such unerring precision? It's you!

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

IT'S UP TO YOU

It's up to you whether you want to continue playing golf at the same level you are now playing or, to spend as much time, practicing your mental golf as you do your physical. Which of the following scenes would you prefer to experience?

Scenario I.

Scorching desert winds sizzle across burning sands, but you relax, cool and comfortable in your shiny new sport utility vehicle. Las Vegas beckons, a gleaming oasis 150 miles further down a barren highway. Your owner's manual and toolbox are stashed and forgotten beneath a rear seat. Life is good! Abruptly, your engine makes a disturbing, grinding noise. A sinister hot smell seeps from your dash. As the power slowly drains from your dream car, you coast to the sandy shoulder. Searing heat burns your face when you open the

door. You pop the hood and gaze dejectedly at a maze of meaningless wires. Belatedly you wish you had examined your owner's manual in the comfort of your air-conditioned living room. You consider your toolbox but realize you have no idea how to use the tools neatly placed in the compartments. Your sweat-soaked clothes are glued to your skin. You look at the empty road stretching into a glaring oblivion and wonder how long you can survive without shade or water.

Scenario II.

Scorching desert winds sizzle across burning sands, but you relax, cool and comfortable in your shiny new sport utility vehicle. Las Vegas beckons, a gleaming oasis 150 miles farther down a barren highway. Your owner's manual and toolbox are strategically placed near a rear door. Life is good! Abruptly, your engine makes a disturbing, grinding noise. A sinister hot smell seeps from your dash. As power slowly drains from your dream car, you coast to the sandy shoulder. Searing heat burns your face when you open the door. You grab your toolbox as you pop the hood. You smile with relief as you identify the problem quickly and make a simple repair with your trusty tools. As you slide back into your leather seat, cool air washes across your damp forehead. You pull back onto the interstate confidently. You congratulate yourself for taking the basic auto maintenance workshop your auto club offered. The time you spent in your easy chair reviewing your owner's manual before the trip sure paid off!

A toolbox loaded with expensive equipment is useless if don't know how to use it. To “repair” your game or any sport in which you're involved, it is necessary to first learn about your mental toolbox. As a golfer, you are loaded with sophisticated and valuable tools of which you are probably not even aware. They are not expensive clubs made of exotic metals, custom printed golf balls, or designer apparel – your most valuable tools are the ones you carry inside your head in your mental toolbox.

Let's take a look at this toolbox and the tools it contains. You can stop reading now if you prefer scene 1. If you prefer scene 2, this document will help you tremendously as you read on.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

THE MENTAL TOOLBOX

The Mental Toolbox (your brain) has two parts to it: an upper compartment called the Conscious Mind and a lower compartment called the Subconscious Mind.

The Conscious Mind is the communication center of the brain. It thinks and reasons. This part of your mind pulls data from your Subconscious Mind to make choices and also sends data back to be stored in the Mental Computer. Your Conscious Mind also contains a priceless tool – the Creative Imagination. We will examine that tool in a short while.

The Subconscious Mind contains three irreplaceable mental tools. These tools are: the *Mental Computer*, the *Self-Image*, and the *Autopilot*. Instead of receiving information from a keyboard, the Mental Computer receives information from the five senses (smell, sight, sound, touch, and taste). It does not filter the information inscribed on it; it accepts and records without question every bit of data experienced by the senses. That is one reason subliminal messages are so powerful.

The Mental Computer gives instructions to the Autopilot (explained later in detail) to perform a given function at a given time. Once the Mental Computer is activated by a command from the conscious mind, the Autopilot can carry out the action without conscious thought or effort.

Another important tool in the Subconscious Mind is the Self-Image. When used in conjunction with the Creative Imagination, it allows you to be the golfer you have dreamed of becoming. A correct and positive Self-Image can make the difference between mediocrity and success. Your perception of yourself determines the kind of golfer you are. You will read more about this important tool later.

When you use these critical tools correctly, you should experience the following mental process.

1. You make a conscious decision to strike the golf ball.

2. Information recorded in your mental Computer from similar past experiences is compared with your present situation.

3. Your Mental Computer, after making the comparisons, sends the appropriate club selection to your Conscious Mind. It is as though it says to your Conscious Mind, “The 9 Iron is your best bet in this situation.”

3. Once the club is selected, you take your stance, and your goal is confirmed, your Autopilot takes over and must be allowed to carry out the instructions without conscious thought or effort. It's at this critical stage that most golfers, as we see later, make their most disastrous mistakes: not only the handicappers, but many professional golfers as well. With your Autopilot in complete control, you make the swing. The only thing left to do is smile as you watch your ball lands right where you expected it!

In the following sections, we will explore in detail, the tools that will bring your golf game to the highest level.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

THE COMPUTER

The Mechanical Vs the Human Computer

Do you remember the first time you worked with a computer? The first thing you learned was how to turn it on. The next step was figuring out what does what and which key enters information; how to print a document; manages files; save information, and so on. You soon discovered that your computer is very obedient. It does exactly what you tell it to do by using the keyboard and instructing it. Once you do that, the memory is able to repeat the process every time you tell it to do so; that's called programming.

The mind also contains a computer, which controls our every action and can be programmed to perform a given action over and over again. The following shows the similarities between the mechanical and human computer.

1. The mechanical computer receives information from the keyboard Similarities

The human computer receives information from the five senses.

2 The mechanical memory consists of silicon chips.

The human memory consists of brain tissue.

3 The mechanical computer retrieves information from memory chips when directed to perform a given activity. It then sends electrical impulses to the equipment it controls.

The human computer retrieves information from the brain memory when directed to perform a given activity. It then sends electrical impulses to the nervous system.

4 By overwriting old information, the mechanical computer is programmed to perform the desired function more efficiently.

By overwriting old information, the mental computer is programmed to perform the desired function more efficiently.

5 The mechanical computer is programmed to successfully reach a designated goal or, to supply an answer to a stated question e.g. $1+2=?$

The human computer is, by nature, already programmed to successfully reach a designated goal or to supply an answer to a question, e.g. which club shall I use.

6 The mechanical computer, by using cybernetic principles, can automatically control many mechanical machines.

The human computer, by using cybernetic principles, can automatically control many physical activities.

7 The mechanical computer cannot reprogram itself without the help of the human creative imagination.

The human computer can reprogram itself by using our own creative imagination.

How they work

Consider this: A keyboard key is pressed. A stream of electrical activity begins to race along a wire. As it moves along it passes through a group of silicon chips.

Leaving the chips, it goes on passing through another set of chips. The enter key is

pressed and the machine begins to click with ferocious activity. The print key is pressed and the clicks continue as a piece of printed paper comes out of the printer. The OFF key is pressed and the machine shuts down. Some time later, the ON key is pressed and all the bells and whistles start up again. A couple of more keystrokes retrieve the previous information. This all takes place in your personal mechanical computer in a matter of seconds.

From the time you were born (perhaps even before that) your mental computer begins to function in somewhat the same way. It records bits of information in your computer, located in your sub-conscious mind, just as surely as the mechanical computer records your commands typed on the keyboard.

Picture your five senses of Touch, Sight, Sound, Taste, and Smell, as keys on a keyboard. Instead of placing data in the mechanical computer's memory by pressing the appropriate letter on the keyboard, a child applies bits of "hurt" information into memory as the association of fire with pain develops. All the information in the human memory evolves from the five senses. The ring of a bell is associated with a telephone (audible). The taste of pizza will jump into one's mouth when the hot pizza is delivered and the aroma flows through the room (smell). Beginning with an empty mental "hard drive," daily experiences "feed" bits of information into it and eventually become one's complete frame of reference.

There is much more to be learned about the mental process. This overview is not meant to be a treatise on the mind, but to provide just enough information to allow the reader to understand the theories on the following pages.

How to Gather Nuts and Spin a Web

A squirrel has a computer in its head that works similar to mechanical and human computers. The squirrel's computer is not constructed in the same manner as the mechanical computer, but nonetheless it operates and performs in much the same manner. The squirrel's computer has been pre-programmed, that is, it has been stocked with bits of information needed to function, *before it was born*. Nature has provided, just in a way that the squirrel will automatically behave in certain ways as it receives new information from its environment. The squirrel can receive such information from its sense organs in much the same manner as humans receive

information from their five senses. It has, for example, biological thermostats built into its skin very similar in operation—though not in mechanics—to those we have in our homes to control our heating systems. Those in our homes automatically turn on the furnace when the temperature drops because you have programmed or “set” it to do so. The squirrel's thermostats tell it to start gathering nuts and storing them when winter is approaching because it has been programmed by nature to do this. The squirrel cannot alter its pre-programmed course of behavior.

The pre-programmed computer in the rattlesnake tells it to coil and strike when receiving danger signals from its environment. The pre-programmed computer in the spider enables it to spin intricate webs, which never deviate from the pattern peculiar to that species—just as the honeybee is pre-programmed to construct honeycombs as if from a master blueprint. No spider has ever taken a course in knitting nor has any bee ever studied structural engineering; they don't need to, for their every goal is pre-set, pre-programmed in their “computers”.

This “pre-programming” is commonly referred to as animal “instinct”. These instincts are acts that are carried out without conscious thought or effort.

How We Differ From the Animals

Let us now take a look at the most complex piece of equipment there is: Man.

Biologically speaking, we “homo sapiens” are no different from the lower animals. We of course look different but that is in appearance only. Compared to an ape, there is very little difference between us. We have two arms, two legs, one nose, two ears, a built-in computer, an automatic guidance system, etc. We have, biologically speaking, everything an ape has,—so what makes us so different? What is it that we humans have that permits us to make decisions, change our course of action, paint pictures, or to control our destiny? That one thing is A CREATIVE IMAGINATION. (Not wishing to get into any philosophical arguments, I will concede that some may choose to call, what I refer to as the Creative Imagination, by the name of spirit, soul, consciousness, etc., but for the sake of this material, I choose to call it simply the Creative Imagination.) How the imagination will help us to golf better is studied in a later chapter.

People Program Themselves

The question usually comes up: “Are we humans also pre-programmed by nature in the same way as the lower animals?” Except for a few functions the answer is no. For our purpose at hand let's just make the assumption that the human computer comes into this world void, completely blank of any kind of information at all. This is the reason many psychologists say that a human being has no instincts.

Except for a few functions like breathing, sucking, etc. everything man knows and every act man performs has to be learned. Beginning with an empty or blank “memory”, (as all mechanical computers do.) daily experiences “feed” bits of information into this memory. A child, for example, applies bits of “hurt” information into his memory as he learns to associate fire with getting hurt. He learns to walk and to feed himself. He learns to stack building blocks and he learns to talk. He learns that by spinning a rope over his head while jumping up and down at the correct speed he can “jump rope”. Through all this, learning information is fed into his memory. As he goes to school, he is simply in a process of having all kinds of information fed into his memory and computer, or as we commonly say, “he memorizes.”

One might ask, “For what purpose do people program themselves?” People program themselves FOR THE SUCCESSFUL ATTAINMENT OF GOALS. As the mechanical computer is programmed by man to successfully accomplish the purpose for which it was programmed, so are the lower animals programmed by nature to successfully attain goals—the seeking out of food, procreation of the species and so on. When a young child practices tying his shoe, he is programming himself to *successfully* tie the shoe. When a young man goes to college and studies medicine, he is programming himself to be a *successful* doctor—or, when a person learns to swing a golf club, he is programming himself to golf *successfully*. One can go on and on to show that *every act man performs is directed toward the successful accomplishment of a particular goal*. Man is by nature GOAL ORIENTED. Even some golfers who say they cannot do better, have a goal in mind and, as we shall see in a later chapter, this goal can be the successful achievement of failure. I refer to this type of person as a successful failure

How Do People Program Themselves

People program themselves by REMEMBERING SUCCESSES AND REFUSING TO THINK ABOUT FAILURES. All learning is accomplished by remembering successes and it is this knowledge we are going to apply, that will enable us to improve our golf.

Scientists at a major university created a mechanical mouse that was always communicating with itself. The mouse was designed for a single purpose – solving mazes. The program stipulated that when the mouse struck an obstacle, it would turn 90° and move forward. It would continue ahead until it met another obstacle. Upon colliding with the next obstruction, the mouse would again turn 90° and move forward. The mouse's computer recorded each successful forward motion, however it ignored all failures. The first attempt required many 90° turns as the mouse bumped into walls frequently. Progress was slow as the mouse made many adjustments. However, on the second attempt, the mouse zipped through the maze without hitting a single obstacle. The mouse made no mistakes, even though it had no memory of past failures. All that was required to reach the goal was the memory of the successes.

When you concentrate on past failures, you are communicating with yourself that you are a loser. The Self-Image in turn affects reality and you continue to be unsuccessful. With each negative image, you generate a likelihood of future failure. Punishing yourself by reliving past defeats only paves the way for additional defeats.

The opposite is equally true. When you concentrate on past successes, you create a Self-Image of being a winner. The Self-Image affects reality and you continue to win. With each positive image, you generate a likelihood of future success. Rewarding yourself by reliving victories paves a path to more victories.

The mouse was electronically programmed to remember successes and did not register failures. It is not important to know what not to do; *it is important to know what to do.*

Think back for a moment to the time you were learning to drive an automobile, dance, write, or any other activity requiring muscle coordination. As you learned to

perform one of these acts, you remembered the times you performed successfully and forgot the times you failed. A child learns to tie his shoes, comb his hair or to pick up a glass of water by remembering his successes and forgetting his failures. Watch a baby sometimes while keeping this in mind. It's very interesting when you understand what it is doing.

Watch a boy catching fly balls in a little league ball game and you will be watching a boy programming himself to catch fly balls.

Later, you are shown how to use your creative imagination to program your mind in the same way that the mouse was programmed to remember what works and to forget what does not. Watching video tapes is a good way to program your nervous system. By visualizing your best strokes and creating a Self-Image of a proficient golfer, you are programming yourself to reach your goal. The more you believe in the possibility of success, the greater chance it has of becoming a reality. Ignore your failures and concentrate on what you do well. Record a message of triumph on your mental computer.

You must be committed to self-improvement. Reprogramming your nervous system to produce better results does not come without effort. Studies have shown that it takes at least 21 days to reprogram yourself. The time spent is well worth it.

Every golfer will make shots that are not ideal. The important point is to forget about those moments. As you relive and anticipate your successes, you are creating the Self-Image of a winner. Invest the time and mental energy and you will see the difference when you hit the course.

Now that we know something about our mental computer— how it works, how it is programmed, and why we program it, let's see in the next section how it controls our Autopilot.

THINGS TO REPEAT TO YOURSELF

I am programmed for success

I communicate with my automatic pilot.

I am programmed to perform very efficiently.

I am programmed to be a winner

I use my imagination to program myself.

I am in control

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

THE AUTOPILOT

In 1948, a brilliant mathematician and computer scientist was engrossed in top-secret research at MIT for the United States Department of Defense. Harvard-educated Dr. Norbert Wiener was at the forefront of a ground breaking interdisciplinary investigation into the way humans and machines transform information into desired performance. It was obvious that military effectiveness required a new level of sophistication – equipment that would not simply follow instructions, but that would determine the best course of action. Drawing from ancient Greek, Dr. Wiener named this exciting new field of communication and control —Cybernetics.

With the introduction of Cybernetics, the limitations of machines were redefined. Machines were no longer restricted to following direct human commands; scientists recognized that machines could be created that would determine their own best course of action. Using the nervous system of living organisms as a model, machines could be designed with automatic feedback, giving them the ability to self-correct. This led to the development of incredible new devices. Cybernetic theories have also been applied to the study of human behavior. These remarkable theories are the key to maximizing personal performance in many fields, including golf.

In order to apply the techniques to your golf, it is important to understand that cybernetics is a set of operating principles applied to self-instructed, goal-seeking devices. There are two types of goal seeking devices.

The first is where the target is already identified and the goal is to reach the target.

The second kind of goal seeking device is where the target is not known and the goal is to find it.

The surface-to-air heat-seeking missile is an example of the first kind of goal seeking device; the target is already identified and the goal is to reach it. Before its introduction, missiles were fired in one direction and either struck or missed their target. Aircraft were very difficult to hit. Anti-aircraft guns during world war one were shot into the air with the hope that some would hit an aircraft.

By applying Cybernetic principles, surface-to-air missiles were created. In addition, by employing goal-seeking programming, these missiles reach their targets with deadly efficiency. Heat sensors perceive the temperature of aircraft engines from long distances. The missile is fired in the general direction of the enemy aircraft and searches the sky for the heat given off by the engine. It heads toward the heat source and “locks onto” the aircraft. When the aircraft's sensors reveal that a missile has locked on to it, it begins evasive maneuvers. Incredibly, the missile can recognize that the enemy aircraft has changed its course of direction. By sensing the feedback from the enemy aircraft, the missile automatically changes its course and stays on the tail of the aircraft. The missile moves to the right, left, up, or down, constantly making adjustments and staying locked onto the target. Signals go back and forth from the enemy aircraft and the missile. It instructs itself until it successfully reaches its goal and hits the target. Just as thinking too much will confuse the mind and body, the enemy aircraft drops a series of parachutes with flares attached. That confuses the missile as the enemy gets away.

The Invader

The following example reveals another Autopilot in action.

The invader enters the combat zone and rolls across the terrain at high speed. The defender immediately identifies the target. It locks on to the moving enemy. The defender begins attacking, then with building speed, mercilessly dives in for the assault. The first strike makes contact, sending the enemy pitching uncontrollably to the left. Taking aim with lightning speed, a second strike is launched, sending the enemy reeling to the right. With barely a pause, a vicious

onslaught from above hurls the battered target forward where it wobbles incapacitated. A final frontal assault ensures complete control as the kitten picks up the ball that rolled across the floor and carries it off in its mouth.

The kitten, as with all animal species, is equipped with an automatic guidance system like the heat-seeking missile. It aims, pounces, hops, strikes, and strikes again, making all the calculations and adjustments in fractions of a second with its mental Computer and Autopilot. Just as the heat-seeking missile makes automatic adjustments using heat sensors, the kitten makes automatic adjustments using its senses. The surface-to-air missile mimics the sense of touch (heat) while the kitten uses the sense of sight. Like the missile, the kitten responds and changes course automatically without questioning. It consistently attempts to reach the goal of striking the target. Why is this significant? Because you are also equipped with an efficient automatic goal seeking guidance system – your Autopilot. *By learning to identify, trust, and use your guidance system, you can make golf swings as naturally and effectively as a kitten strikes a rolling ball.*

Catch It If You Can

A piece of paper falls from your desk. Then, something amazing takes place. In your brain, the cerebral cortex begins sending and receiving nerve signals. Deep in the sensory cortex messages from the sense organs pour in, delivering critical data. The associative cortex region reacts, integrating the multiple inputs, processing the information, and carrying out complex responses. In the motor cortex, instructions are composed and transmitted. The cerebellum fine-tunes the commands and they continue in a complicated network with electrical and chemical impulses traveling from neuron to neuron. Within the neurons, the dendrites receive impulses, pass them to the axons where they skip across synapses and transmit the impulses to the dendrites of other neurons. In this way, the information is communicated within the brain, on to the spinal cord, the brachial plexus, and into the upper extremities. More than 3,000 signals take place; as muscles tense and contract – at last, it happens! You respond instinctively to catch the paper as it falls.

In almost no time, you project the angle at which it is dropping, compute the fall velocity, react to the location of probable impact, determine the appropriate intercept

point, accelerate your hand to the logical position, and easily catch the falling paper. Your Autopilot locks onto the target and captures it before you think about what you are doing. If a breeze catches the paper in its flight, you make even more complicated calculations in response to the changing conditions and still usually catch the paper. Your self-correcting, goal seeking system reacts quickly and efficiently.

Your nervous system, working under the guidance of your Autopilot, is constantly and automatically making calculations and adjustments. Without making a conscious decision to do so, your body adjusts to conditions during any purposeful activity.

Let's try an experiment to demonstrate this. Place a coin on a table and touch the center of the coin with your finger. As your finger moved to contact the center of the coin, your hand shifted slightly from one direction to the other, your finger adjusted and readjusted as you zig zagged minutely toward your target. Your Autopilot continually corrected your movements to bring you to your goal in much the same way your hand constantly moves right and then left again as you stay on course while driving your car. Now try this – look at the coin on the table from about 3 feet away. Close your eyes and wait for few seconds. Then, without opening your eyes, sit down and attempt to touch the center of the coin without touching anything else first. It is almost impossible, except by sheer luck, to touch it the way you did when you could see it. When your eyes are open, they identify that you are off course and send a signal to your nervous system and muscles to get you back on course. You do this automatically and without conscious thought or effort, in the same way you should be swinging a golf club.

Your personal Autopilot in your head works much like the Autopilot of an aircraft, the kitten striking the ball, or the heat-seeking missile previously mentioned. It's absolutely essential that you let your Autopilot control your swing without conscious interference.

About Goal Setting

My word processor is a good example of a goal-setting device. When I turn on my spell-check feature the computer compares every word in my document with words in the dictionary to answer the question of whether the word is not only

spelled correctly but also to see if it is even in the dictionary. If I enter the digits $2 + 2 =$ in a computer, it will search all the programming in the computer searching for an answer. Place any familiar object on the table when the room is dark and try to find the same object among several other familiar objects. Your hand will grope around scanning all the objects on the table. All the while, comparisons are being made with data already input your mental computer. “This doesn't feel like it. Neither does this one. Ah, here it is.” You have just found the answer to the question, “Where is the object?”

What is your goal when you go to play a game of golf? What is your goal as you are about to tee off on the first hole? Do you even know?

People do not engage in behavior unless they intend to successfully reach a goal. When small children practice tying their shoes, they are learning to successfully reach the goal of making a snug bow. When a young lady goes to law school she is learning to be a successful lawyer. And when people learn to play golf, they should have the intention of reaching their goal of playing golf successfully.

We are naturally goal-oriented. All actions we perform are directed toward reaching a goal. Even leisure activities fulfill goals, such as relaxing, spending time with companions, or experiencing pleasure. Normally, properly functioning people do not walk out the door in the morning and wander the streets aimlessly. In other words, everything we do is directed toward the successful attainment of a goal. Keep that in mind. *It's one of the most important factors for improving your golf game.*

Your brain uses the information it receives from your senses and combines that with the information that you have stored from past experiences. It determines the best course of action to achieve your goal and sends the instructions to your body. By understanding this process, you can make it work to your best advantage as you play golf. The same Cybernetic principles that control the heat-seeking missile and assure that the playing kitten will successfully strike the rolling ball can help you achieve a machine-like, precision golf swing – but only if you first define your goal after you take your stance and address the ball.

Two young boys toss a baseball back and forth, laughing, and joking. A pigtailed redhead practices the scales on a piano as she daydreams about the boy who sits in front of her in math class. A student types form letters to customers, thanking them for their recent purchases. As time passes, the boys miss fewer catches, the redhead plays more smoothly, and the student types faster. What do all of these people have in common? They are all computer programmers programming their Autopilots and the Mental Computers in their brains.

Watch a boy practicing to catch fly balls in a little league ball game and you watch a boy using his Computer and Autopilot. At a major league ball game, you can see the results of that same programming in action. The ball is hit and immediately the fielder's ears pick up the sound of the impact against the bat. Through past experience (information stored in his Computer) he knows the ball was hit hard. His eyes follow the flight of the ball and he knows it was hit high into the air. The wind direction and speed are quickly calculated and necessary computations are made in microseconds. With the specific goal of intercepting the ball, the fielder's brain presses the Autopilot start button, giving his body the signal to go and intercept the ball. Experience and knowledge have programmed the fielder's Computer to make the proper calculations needed to successfully reach his goal of catching the ball.

There is a direct parallel between the fielder intercepting a fly ball, a heat-seeking missile intercepting an enemy aircraft and a golfer swinging at a golf ball. All three are set to go at a given signal. Once they are given the signal to go, they must remain on automatic, letting the Autopilot to direct their actions.

Your Computer and Autopilot automatically chart the best course of action. The heat-seeking missile doesn't slow down to check its payload. The major league ball player doesn't hesitate and decide how high he should raise his hands, how fast he should run, when to open his glove, etc., he just does it automatically. When you program your Autopilot to swing at a golf ball correctly, you will be far more successful if you leave yourself on automatic. There is no other way to be consistently successful.

Once you begin your swing, you may believe that you are not interfering with your Autopilot. But, as we will see, this is not always the case. Completing your

swing without conscious thought or effort is a skill that must be practiced and cultivated. Psychological obstacles must be identified and overcome.

I have seen too many golfers appear to fail by not staying on automatic control. Later, we will examine stories about professionals and what happened to them. Just because they are professional golfers does not mean they are immune to some of the same psychological failures as “duffers.”

How To Jam Your Autopilot

For those of you who play the piano, play a chorus of the most familiar song you know. As you play this, you will notice how your mind can be miles away or you can be carrying on a conversation with someone else. You are not even thinking of what you are doing because all you are doing is playing back through your nervous system, or Autopilot, a song that has been programmed into your Computer. Now try playing the same tune while thinking about what note comes next. Give each finger a conscious signal to move to the next key and see how it affects your smooth playing. Give each muscle a separate conscious command to move the finger. While you are at it, don't forget to give your arm muscle the signal to raise and lower your hand. Try the same thing as you type and you'll realize how difficult it can become if you think too much.

How To Fall Off A Ladder

Another example of how conscious thought or effort will “jam” your Autopilot is shown through an experience I had years ago while in the contracting business. My work sometimes required me to climb to rooftops, usually only about 11 feet high. I did this climbing from a ladder while operating completely on automatic control and, when it came time for me to come down, this was also done without conscious thought or effort. I did not give the slightest thought to where I had to put my feet. The step of the ladder was always where my body knew it would be. I had, through experience, been programmed to climb ladders and did so successfully, staying on automatic. One day, however, it was necessary to climb to the top of a building 20 feet tall. This may not seem like much more than 11 feet until you get to the top and realize how high you really are.

After completing my work on top of the building, I was ready to come down. That's when I got in trouble. The proper way to descend the ladder would have been in the same manner as coming off of rooftops only 11 feet high—fully on automatic. I should have let my automatic guidance system do the job for me. However, in this particular case, realizing how high I was, I became too careful. I consciously gave thought to what I was doing- checking where the first step was and making sure I had a good hold of the roof's edge as I stepped off. By giving conscious thought to what I was doing, I “jammed” my Autopilot fell to the ground fracturing my hip. If only I would have stayed on automatic control!

Shortly, we will see how golfing, like playing the piano, driving a car, or combing your hair can be performed much more efficiently if you quit thinking so much and keep yourself on automatic.

How Great Is The Penalty

What is it that causes people to “jam” or hinder the efficiency of their Autopilot? If I were to lay a board 20 feet long and 12 inches wide across your front lawn and ask you to walk on it from one end to the other, you could undoubtedly do it even while reading this book. You would be completely relaxed, giving no thought whatsoever to this simple task. Now, take this same board and lay it between two buildings—each one 20 stories tall! Now walk it from one end to the other. “Go to you-know-where!” you would say.

Amused, I would reply, “What's the matter? If you can do it on your front lawn you should be able to do it 20 stories in the air!”

What is it that makes a person fail to perform the same task in different situations? There is only one answer: THE PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO PERFORM! Tension increases as the penalty for failure to perform increases. If you should fall off the board while it is lying across your front lawn, there would be no penalty so there is no tension. The performance tension increases as the penalty for failing to perform increases. The penalty when you are 20 stories high could possibly be your very life—hence the terrific tension and the greater possibility of failure to reach your goal. The penalty for failing to get a par or birdie when needed could be the loss of a championship.

The following took place on the Par 3, 17 th hole of the final round of a tournament.

The green was small and surrounded by water. The golfer was one stroke ahead of the field going into the hole. He only needed two pars for a win. On the previous three rounds he had par—birdie—par on this hole and three previous pars on the last hole.

The golfer stood behind the tee surveying the shot. Then he addressed the ball, backed away, took a couple of practice swings, addressed the ball again and backed away again. The pressure was mounting on him to get two pars. I told my wife “This guy's in trouble and may go into the water.”

He finally struck the ball and watched as it flew over the green and into the water. That swing cost him the tournament because he lost the first hole in a sudden death playoff that followed. He was so disgusted he hooked his ball, played a bad second and ended up losing that hole.

And all because he interfered with his Autopilot. This poor guy should have forgotten about the water and needing a par, and just hit the ball. My guess is that his mind was cluttered with negative images of missing the green. He may have been considering how he might lose the tournament if he failed to get his par. There are many reasons, but I can say for certain that he was interfering with his Autopilot.

The Evasive Aircraft

A heat-seeking missile tears through the night sky. The targeted aircraft's control panel flashes a warning – the missile has locked on to it. Immediately, brightly burning flares pepper the ink black sky, dangling from parachutes released by the plane. The automatic guidance system on the missile registers a dozen sources of heat. In which direction should it proceed: up? down? right? left? The guidance system of the missile is jammed. It is overloaded; no longer able to focus on the target. The missile fails in its mission as the enemy escapes into the darkness.

The missile's automatic guidance system is an effective tool, unless it becomes jammed. If other influences confuse the controls, it can no longer identify the target and accomplish its goal. The system is designed to focus on one objective only. It is

essential to recognize the necessity of staying on target – for both the heat-seeking missile and the effective golfer.

As a successful golfer, you must identify your goal and focus on that target. You must not allow your Autopilot to become overwhelmed, distracted or confused. Once your Autopilot becomes jammed, it is unlikely that you will accomplish your goal. Once your Mental Computer has been programmed, it is critical that your Autopilot guidance system be allowed to work automatically without losing sight of the goal.

When a golfer addresses the ball the only goal must be *to strike it properly*. It is not to drive the ball in any particular direction. Your stance dictates the direction the ball will fly provided you strike it correctly. Don't overwhelm your Autopilot by becoming concerned about where your ball will land, if it will hook or slice, or if it will land in a sand trap. You have only one goal - *to strike the ball correctly*.

Unfortunately, losing focus on what their goal is has stymied many professional golfers. A recent example occurred during the 1998 Doral Ryder Open when Ernie Ells and Greg Kraft both only needed pars on the final hole to tie Elkington for the lead. Doesn't sound too hard for two great professionals but you must realize that they are also human.

Ells had 154 yards to the hole. Ells appeared to be looking far to the right of the green. Striking his ball he pulled his shot, ending up with a difficult lie on the left of the green. Still, it was not too bad because he could be on in three and perhaps a one putt for a tie.

Right behind Ells on the 16th hole, Greg Kraft was making a birdie for a share of the lead at -13. A beautiful drive on the final hole set him up for a possible birdie for the win or at least a par for a share of the lead.

Back to Ells. After studying his shot for what seemed like 20 minutes, he finally advanced his ball about 10 feet, still off the green, and watched as it rolled back about 15 feet, almost going in the water. He now needed to hole his next shot for a share of the lead. I felt sorry for him as I watched him end with a double bogey 6 and back to -11.

Kraft had played expertly during all four days. Considering the way he had played to that point and with only 178 to the hole, all he needed was a par for a share of the lead. Taking aim for the center of the green, he hit four inches behind the ball advancing it 100 yards into the water on the left of the green. On in 4 and a great putt locked him in second place by himself at -12.

What happened to cause both of these fine professionals to fail to make par is pure speculation, but I can give my personal opinion and shed some light on the probabilities. The mind cannot effectively concentrate on more than one thing at a time. Try it sometime and find out for yourself. *You simply cannot do it.* I find it likely that they were thinking “results” instead of striking the ball as they should have. How can your Autopilot be striking the ball correctly if your Conscious Mind is on the green? If you question this assessment, consider what Ells said after his game was over. When asked what he was thinking about, he replied, “Get it (the ball) on the damn green”. Later he said “I had to get it on the green to give myself a chance for a 4.”

It appears to me that his goal was getting the ball on the green instead of just striking it well as he done all day up to that point.

As for Greg Kraft who only won \$327,000 that year, I felt badly for him. During his post game interview he spoke about what he had attempted to do. “I was trying to hit a hard shot and turn it in there and get it to run to the corner.”

Why didn't he just try to hit the ball like he had been doing all four days? With such a big prize almost in his grasp, it could have been that he simply choked. I say elsewhere that the penalty for failure to perform causes pressure. Realizing that the failure for not getting a 4 on the hole would cost him a possible win must have been terrific pressure on him.

The solution then becomes one of training yourself to give no thought whatsoever to penalties. This, as we shall see in a later chapter, can be accomplished by listening to training tapes, watching videos, or listening to subliminal messages.

Professional Golfers Are No Different

Even professional golfers sometimes fail to define or understand their goals. Nobody is completely immune to these roadblocks to better performance.

In the 1970 Bryon Nelson Classic, Arnold Palmer completed his round with a 274. If Jack Nicklaus shot four on the last hole he would win with a 273. A five tied him with Palmer at 274 and led to a sudden death playoff. It is revealing to look at how Nicklaus ended up shooting five.

Jack's drive landed at the base of a tree on the left of the fairway. He only had one choice. He could chip to the fairway in two, on in three, and, hopefully, a one-putt for a win. Not impossible. Suddenly, Jack began conferring with the officials. Next, he picked up his ball and took a free drop away from the tree. The TV tower was behind the tree and in Jack's line to the green, entitled him to a free drop. The rule is that when a temporary man-made object is in line with the ball and the green, you are entitled to a free drop in sight of the green. What a break for Jack Nicklaus! I immediately bet my friend with me that Jack would miss the green on his next shot. I believe he was using a nine iron.

How many of you are willing to bet Jack Nicklaus would miss the green while hitting a nine iron? Not too many I suspect. I had reasoned that Jack was the caliber of golfer who would not want to win on a fluke. I hypothesized that from where he got his free drop, he could possibly make birdie or even his four to win. That would mean that his victory would come on a fluke. Jack would rather win because of his play than on a fluke. I believed that he subconsciously wanted to make a five. If he hit the green in two he would have to three putt to make five, a not-too-likely event. The only way to make five was to miss the green.

We watched as his ball went flying over the green in two, on in three and a two-putt gave him a 274 for the tie.

Jack later said something to the effect that "I never hit an iron so badly and so far in all my life. I don't know what happened."

I don't think he was aware of the roadblock keeping him from making his four. He achieved his goal of making his five and then went on to win in sudden death.

True “professional” golfers do not want to win tournaments on flukes. Take, for instance, Steve Scott. Perhaps he would have won the 1996 US Amateur Championship if he had not been so “professional.” At the 36 th hole, Tiger Woods marked his ball, which was in Scott's line of putt. In an act of true sportsmanship, Scott reminded Woods to return his ball marker to its original position. If Woods had failed to do this, he would have lost the hole, the match, and his third championship. (Tim Hogarth, the eventual winner of the Amateur Public Links final, lost a hole when he failed to replace his marker.) Later, on television, Scott was praised for this act of sportsmanship. He responded that if he won the championship, he didn't want to win it on a fluke.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

THE SELF-IMAGE

More time, more money, and more effort has gone into the study of the human mind during the past few decades than at any other time in history. In this time, science has revealed one the most useful discoveries for changing human behavior. That tool is the Self-Image.

The Self-Image is simply a mental picture of the person you believe yourself to be. You may see yourself as being a success or failure, beautiful or disfigured, meek or aggressive, gifted or inadequate, etc. None of these descriptions, however, need necessarily be true to have profound effect on the way you feel and behave.

Through past experiences and the use of your Imagination, your Self-Image, complete down to the last detail, is programmed in the Mental Computer in your head.

Things people say to you and events that happen in your life combine to help you make an assessment of yourself. This assessment may be correct, distorted, exaggerated, or completely wrong. Nonetheless, it will be one of the most influential forces in your life. It can make you happy or it can make you miserable. It can help you to get good grades in school or to flunk. It can lead to your success or failure. It can help to make you a good golfer or it can hold you to your current level.

In his book, *Psycho-Cybernetics*, Maxwell Maltz discusses the Self-Image. “A human being always acts and feels and performs in accordance with what he imagines to be true about himself and his environment.” As far as the individual is concerned, the only thing true to him is what information is fed into his Mental Computer's memory bank. The following story can illustrate this point.

How To Program For Failure

Six month-old Billy uses little noises and crying to communicate with those who care for him. He may be hungry, thirsty, or need a diaper change. If his mother is inattentive or busy, he may fail to get a response to his cries. He may learn that he cannot obtain what he needs by crying, but since it is his only way of expressing himself, he may suffer his first serious frustrations of failure and enter the failure information into his computer's memory bank. He may seem to fail again when his parents, wishing to make an impression, stand Billy in the middle of the floor and encourage him to walk before he is physically or emotionally ready. His parents and his friends laugh at his “cute” awkwardness as he falls on his “you-know-what.” Billy, however, puts more bits of failure information into his memory bank. (This is one thing I point out to expectant mothers. Quit laughing I tell them but give the kid encouragement to try again)

Later, when he is old enough to be getting around the house and into the pots and pans, his mother may get irritated and shout, “Get out of here, can't you do anything right?” More bits of failure are entered in his memory bank. This leads to a lack of confidence. Children may call him a sissy or cry baby when he becomes easily frustrated. He is timid and afraid to try new things. He will act consistently in accordance with his Self-Image. He goes to school and, consistent with his Self-Image of failure, he gets bad grades. The more bad grades he gets, the more he confirms and adds to his Self-Image as a failure. As more negative data is added, his poor Self-Image becomes fixed in his mind.

A person will repeatedly seek to prove to himself that his Self-Image is true.

Billy's teachers may tell him that he is not dumb, that all he has to do is try harder and he can improve. "Not dumb!" he will exclaim, "Just look at my report card!" He has proven his Self-Image to himself and to others.

A boy was born to an English couple. We would normally assume that when he grows up, he will speak the English language. However, a German couple adopts him immediately after birth. He grows up with a Self-Image of being German. He acts, feels, and performs as a German. He will speak German and he will feel German. He will act, feel, and perform consistently with what he believes to be true about himself and his environment.

Prescott Lecky was a schoolteacher, as well as one of the greatest pioneers in the psychology of Self-Image. As a teacher, Lecky was in a position to test out ideas concerning the Self-Image. By helping students change the Self-Image in their minds, he was able to change "D" students into "A" students, change bad spellers into good spellers and to cure students of nail biting and stuttering.

You may be wondering, "What has all of this to do with golf?" The point is that in the same way, Lecky changed bad spellers to good spellers and "D" students to "A" students by helping them to change their Self-Image; you can begin to change from a high-handicap golfer to a low-handicap golfer by changing your Self-Image. Change your Self-Image to one of a better golfer and you help to make that vision a reality. You will learn the technique in a later section.

How To Develop Stomach Disorders

It is important that you understand what the Self-Image is, and how it affects a person's mental and physical attitude in order to apply it to golf. A friend of mine is the head of several businesses and, needless to say, very successful and wealthy. For years, he had stomach disorders and took medication. One day, the subject of his disorder came up in our conversation. I asked him to describe a typical, successful businessperson. In his description, he mentioned stomach disorders. He associated ulcers and other gastric troubles with pressures of the business world. Over the years, he had inscribed in his memory bank the image of a successful businessperson – including stomach disorders. I smiled to myself as I thought how well he had worked to become his picture of success, including the painful and unnecessary stomach

problems. I prevailed upon him to change his Self-Image to that of a calm, successful businessperson without stomach disorders. I encouraged him to mentally see himself in the mirror of his mind and imagine a calm, successful businessperson. I told him to make himself feel the way that man would feel. What I was really asking him to do was to reprogram the Mental Computer in his mind so that when he defined himself as a successful businessperson, the new information would come forth. He followed my suggestions and has not seen a doctor for his stomach or taken stomach medication for more than eleven years!

See Yourself As An Improved Golfer

“But I still want to know what all of this has to do with golf.” Here it is. As stated earlier, a person will act, feel and perform consistently with what he imagines to be true about himself and his environment. Through re-programming, your Self-Image is changed. Imagine yourself to be a better golfer than your present score indicates, and you will automatically begin to improve. Imagine yourself to be a golfer capable of shooting five or more strokes lower than usual and you will improve. Sounds easy doesn't it? It is, but it takes practice. I do not mean physical practice but mental practice. Play-act the role of a better golfer. Feel what he feels. Sell yourself on the fact that you are a better golfer. You might say that you have heard that before, that it is just positive thinking. Not quite. Positive thinking is just that—thinking. I emphasize positive feeling.

How to Cry

The following true story illustrates how a person can change their Self-Image from who they are into a figment of their imagination.

I looked up and found myself in Salem, Massachusetts. It seemed that the whole town had gone mad. I didn't know who or what to believe. My wife was accused of doing wrong – a horrible, dangerous accusation. I feared I would lose her forever. And there were those girls. Were they demons, witches, or also victims? I could not tell. We were crammed into a tiny courtroom. Sense and reason had fled. And those girls- what did they want? Four of them off to my right started screaming. They were pointing to an imaginary yellow bird sitting on a large wooden beam overhead. Another girl to my left started screaming. Then the

stage became a mass of confusion as one of the other characters tried to understand what was going on. "Where's a bird? I see no bird," he shouted as the girls became hysterical. I felt myself caught up in this confusion as tears started flowing from my eyes. The "bird" began to fly down toward the girls across the stage. Suddenly all four girls ran, screaming hysterically from the far side of the stage to my left; everything seemed so real that I could swear I saw the yellow bird. In the chaos I felt faint and looked up, no longer sure what was real and what was not. Was there a bird? I will never know. Tears and fear blinded me. When, at last, the curtain fell on this grim scene, my face was wet, my body shook, and sights and sounds overwhelmed my mind.

Through self-hypnosis and visualization, my Self-Image was changed from a student acting in a production at a local college to that of an 82-year-old man in the year 1692.

Please note that I said you would act consistently with what you imagine to be true . . . *Imagine is the key word here.*

My role was that of an 82-year-old man whose wife was about to be hanged for witchcraft. In the third act that takes place in the courtroom, I was to become emotional and cry because my wife was taken away to be hanged. During rehearsals, the director kept saying to me, "Cry, cry, cry, dammit!" but I could not because I did not feel the part. I used positive thinking and that is all I did; I kept on thinking, trusting that I would be able to perform well.

When you have a goal fixed firmly in your mind, your Autopilot will take you there better than you ever could through conscious thought or effort. With this knowledge and belief, I was firmly convinced that the tears would come. I reassured my director and waited for opening night.

When the proper time came, I did not consciously think of every movement I was to make. In the theater of my mind, I visualized myself in the story's situation. I was automatically feeling and performing based on what I believed to be true about my environment and myself. I just let myself go on "automatic". I became the character

and felt my role. I did not think about what to do, I felt it and it became reality.

Feeling is the secret.

In the same way, a golfer must feel the part of the type of golfer he or she intends to be. Whether a beginning, intermediate, or a professional golfer, you will always play consistently with your Self-Image. You will be taught to use the same process I used to become my character to shape your Self-Image as an improved golfer.

Every day, you make shifts in your Self-Image to adjust to various situations. You play different roles at different times: parent, employee, neighbor, friend, etc. You have a different part to play in each setting. As you adjust your Self-Image, you are seldom aware that you are doing so. This constant change of Self-Image in your daily routine is done unconsciously and automatically. As Shakespeare wrote, *“All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players.”*

Act the part of a better golfer. Feel what it would feel like to play at a higher level. Persuade yourself that you are a better golfer enjoying your new confidence in yourself.

If you are a professional just coming on the tour, do not be intimidated by the other pros. Visualize yourself as capable as they are. Feel like a successful professional golfer. It is not boastful at all, if you feel you are as good as anybody else is. You must believe in yourself. If you don't, who will?

Even my eighteen-month-old granddaughter can change her Self-Image. As I sat watching television, I noticed she was standing in one place while twirling around. This got me wondering what she was feeling at the moment. I knew she was acting consistently with what she believed to be true about herself and her environment, but what was her Self-Image and what was her environment? Suddenly I realized that she was an ice skater twirling on her skates in the middle of her performance. We were watching ice-skating on television and she was playacting the part of the skater she was viewing.

Mary Lou Retton was quoted in Time magazine, telling how she practices her routines in her head. “I see myself hitting all my routines, doing everything perfectly. I imagine all the moves and go through them with the image in my mind.”

I am sure gold medal winner Retton also physically practiced her routines. We saw her many times practicing just before her time came to perform. Nevertheless, what viewers could not see was her mental rehearsal as she was ready to “take off”.

Gold medal winner Greg Louganis was another athlete who practiced in his head. The audience sat in awe as he performed his dives with machine-like precision. In addition, just as Mary Lou Retton visualized her routine, Greg practiced his dives in his head. I once heard him on television describe how before each dive, he stood on the end of the diving board visualizing each dive he was about to make. He saw himself turning this way and that and going through his complete routine. He was sharpening the mental skills that would carry him to success. Once he had completed his mental rehearsal, he “took off” and completed his dive, knowing that his Autopilot would carry him through it without conscious thought or effort. One thing that he always had going for him was that he saw himself as a champion.

You do not have to win medals and championships to see yourself as a champion. Only by first seeing yourself in your mind as a champion will you become one. This is illustrated by the following story.

How To Get To The Rose Bowl

The Los Angeles Times carried an article written by Johnny Pont, who was then head coach at the University of Indiana. His football team was selected as the Big Ten representatives to the 1968 Pasadena Rose Bowl. Probably no one in the country except Mr. Pont and his players expected them to play in the granddaddy of all bowl games. When I read the article, I was interested in the fact that a team that was rated so low in the polls was able to bring off one of the biggest upsets in modern football. I started looking for clues and came up with the answer. In his article, Mr. Pont tells how his players stood in front of the mirror every day, with their football uniforms on, and holding their helmets under their arms, imagining that they were being announced at the Rose Bowl. You can see how one man and a team had a mental image or goal so firmly fixed in their minds (that of going to the Rose Bowl) that it became impossible for the opposition to stop them from attaining it.

You Must Think In Terms Of Possibilities

A person will strive to attain a goal only in direct proportion to how much he believes it is possible to attain.

If you think a goal is impossible, you will not even try for it. The more possible you see the chances of reaching your goal, the harder you try.

If I ask you to jump over a 10-foot barrier, your Mental Computer, Creative Imagination, and Autopilot will “get into a huddle” and talk the situation over (all in a fraction of a second). First, the Creative Imagination will survey the situation and ask the Mental Computer to come up with some facts and figures concerning the possibility. The Mental Computer searches its memory and reports to the Imagination that, according to its calculations, it is not possible for you to jump the 10-foot barrier. Then the Imagination tells the Autopilot (muscles, nerves, heart, etc.) to sit tight. In other words, no attempt is made to jump the barrier. A similar sequence of events will follow should you be asked to jump a nine, seven, or even a 5-foot barrier. If you sincerely believe yourself capable of making such a jump, the Mental Computer may say that at five feet it is possible for you to do it. Immediately your Autopilot gets the word to “take off” and you will attempt the jump. I am not suggesting, however, that just because an attempt is made, you will necessarily attain your goal—that of jumping the barrier. Every person has physical limitations. However, the more possible you imagine a goal is to reach, the more likely you will attempt to reach it. In general, *the more firmly one believes in his capabilities, the more effort he will exert to convert those capabilities into action*. Believe that you can become a better golfer and you will. You will automatically take the steps necessary to achieve your goal.

One of my favorite athletes was Muhammad Ali. He was famous for his cocky expressions “A champion I be – I float like a butterfly, sting like a bee”.

My belief is that between most of his opponents and himself, there was not a great deal of difference in their physical abilities. I believe that many of his opponents were capable of knocking out Ali with one good punch. What he had going for him was his mental ability of really believing he was the greatest. And he was. There was no doubt about it. If other boxers had developed as great of an

attitude, we may have had different champions. I am glad they didn't. No boxer comes close to using his mental abilities more than Muhammad Al did.

When I was a bowler and bowled my first 300 game, I had just completed my studies on the mental aspect of the game and I was ready to prove my theories. I had mentally practiced my new Self-Image of being a different level of bowler than I previously was. I walked into the bowling establishment and asked "Who the greatest bowler in the house is and how come it's me?" I then proceeded to bowl my first of two 300 games and one 299 game. Believing in yourself can produce wonders.

In *Hypnosis For Change*, author and hypnotherapist Josie Hadley says, "If you can think it, see it, and say it – you can do it." Believe it, she is right!

How To Bowl Like A Beginner

An actress at the local college was discussing her bowling with me. She carried a 172 average but wanted to improve. Knowing she was an excellent actress I asked her to shoot a game while imagining herself to be a beginning bowler. The idea was for her to change her Self-Image to play-act the part. Her first two balls went straight in the gutter. Her response was, "Ha, what do you expect? I'm just a beginner."

It was amusing to see her change from a 172 average bowler to a beginner. When she was through, she had shot a total of 63. I then asked her to act out the part of a 225 average bowler. She thought for a few moments trying to see in her mind the new Self-Image. She was actually in the process of changing her Self-Image and preparing a mental stage for better bowling. As she proceeded to bowl, it was like seeing a person I have never seen before. Her delivery could not have been better. Strike after strike she threw and, when she was finished, she had a two-game total of 497.

What does all this mean? It simply means that the first step to better golf is to program in your mind a picture of the type of golfer you wish to be and then believe that you are that golfer. These must be realistic images and you must be able to accept improvement in small steps.

Like a fence around a farm, the Self-Image sets boundaries within which you operate. A farmer can raise very few cattle on a small farm. Expand the boundaries

and you expand the possibilities. However, as I said before, these boundaries also have to be realistic. You cannot golf 15 or more strokes below your present ability overnight. Start by working on four or five strokes and your goal will be within reach. You will be taught how to do this later in this book.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

THE IMAGINATION

I often hear golfers say, “I have been golfing for seven years, and I know all I can do is shoot in the 90s”. They tell me about golfing once a week and how they visit the driving range several times a month. (They are not aware that they could be shooting in the high eighties or better.)

When a person says that he cannot golf any better, he believes this and will proceed to act in accordance with what he believes. He simply will not golf any better as long as he believes he cannot. He has hypnotized himself into false beliefs. That he is not golfing as low a score as he would like does not mean that it is impossible for him to do so in the future. He must use his imagination to change his Self-Image to that of a better golfer and de-hypnotize himself from the false belief that what he shoots now is the best he can score. He will have to change his views. He must feel and believe that shooting lower scores is a real possibility for him.

How The Imagination Affects The Nervous System

You are awakened from a deep sleep by disturbing sounds. You hold your breath, listening to quiet footsteps and soft metallic clanging outside your window. Instantly, you imagine your family victimized; your life destroyed by the stalking evil. You slide noiselessly out of bed, shedding your warm comforter. Tightly controlled fear turns to fierce aggression. You reach for a baseball bat. Body tingling, sweat starting to prickle your brow, you ease your way to the door. Your heart pounds in your chest and roars in your ears as you turn the doorknob ever so delicately. Your quick shallow breaths sound unbelievably loud as you sneak into the yard. Again you sense the deceptively gentle scratch of metal on metal. You visualize someone trying to break into your home. You

crush the bat in an iron grip, raising it with a fierce battle cry. You see two glowing eyes freeze in terror as you rush forward in a savage attack. The horror-stricken raccoon tumbles from the trashcan and awkwardly scrambles off. You slump against the side of the house; the adrenalin rush making your knees shake uncontrollably, barely able to recover from the terrible image of your house being invaded. Later, when cheerful sunbeams warm your face, you will laugh about it, but tonight in the callous darkness you can barely catch your breath.

Your nervous system reacted to what you imagined to be true about yourself and your environment, even though it was just a figment of your imagination. When you had the Self-Image of yourself about to be robbed in the middle of the night, your body reacted as if the scenario in your imagination was true – even though the threat was only a hungry raccoon digging in the trash. Your thoughts and emotions controlled your nervous system – increasing your heart rate, raising your blood pressure and releasing the rush of adrenalin. Your body responded to what you *imagined to be true about yourself and your environment.*

The Imagination is a forceful instrument. It can overcome deeply held convictions and obstructions when it is applied. As we shall see in a later chapter, there are many types of self-imposed barriers and the Imagination is effective in combating them.

As a golfer, you must picture yourself as effective – to see your strong, accurate strokes, to envision yourself playing an outstanding game. (You will be taught the technique in a later section of this book.) If you cannot imagine it, feel it, and believe it, you are restricting yourself. Once you learn to see the capable player you have the potential to become, you have the option of playing at that level. By using your imagination to create a Self-Image of yourself as a confident, capable player, you will improve your game. You can destroy the high-handicap fence that you believed was the boundary of your abilities.

To effectively visualize being an accomplished golfer, you must have mental images to draw on. Rather than simply watching golf on TV, you can videotape players and watch them repeatedly until your imagination “imprints” those images in

your mental computer. Watching proficient golfers perform is the best way to program your nervous system to play better golf. By watching footage of tournaments and replaying the best holes, you are recording examples for your imagination to access during your next round of golf. By watching videos of professional golfers in action you can program your mental computer to “come alive” when called upon. The true story below is the best example I have to illustrate my point.

How To Ski

I repeat again; You always act consistently with what you imagine to be true about yourself and your environment. This is illustrated by an event in which I was involved that required me to change my Self-Image – very quick. I am not a skier, but I love to watch it on television. As I watch, I can feel my nervous system moving this way and that way as the skiers go racing down the hill. Not a lot, but a little. Like many TV viewers, my eyes get heavy as I fall into a deep trance. I become hypnotized by the agility of the skiers I am watching race downhill.

My wife made plans for a skiing trip to Lake Tahoe in California. Her two teenage children asked me if I knew how to ski.

“Are you kidding?” I said. “Who do you think invented all those fancy moves you see on TV?”

I told this story to my friend who owned a cabin in Big Bear Lake, also in California.

“You're going to make a complete idiot of yourself in front of the kids. Let's go up to my place tomorrow and get in a few hours of skiing. As sure-footed as you are you should be up and running in no time”. So off we went the next day.

I took an hour of lessons and was taught to stop by turning the tip of the skis inward. Let me tell you something: it does not always work.

Since this was my first time on skis, my friend told me to take the towrope up the small hill and come down, “just to get the feel of it”.

“Not on your life,” I said. “I'm not going up that little anthill. Where do those chairs go?”

“You must be kidding,” he said.

He told me I shouldn't go up there yet but we went anyway. After hopping off the chair and sliding about ten feet, I “toed in” and stopped, just as I expected to. Then I looked down the steep hill and asked myself “Oh God, what have I gotten myself into?”

It looked quite different looking down from up there than it did looking up from the base.

Not wanting to be embarrassed by my friend I shoved off and started down the hill. I was doing fine as I was going down at what seemed to be two-hundred miles per hour. Seven and eight year-old kids were passing me.

The trees at the bottom of the hill came closer and closer. I figured I had better slow down, so I “toed in”. But guess what? Nothing happened. I just kept going. Nobody told me toeing in doesn't work at high speed.

I probably should have sat down as the instructor told us to, but, no, not this guy. Instead, without conscious thought or effort, and in a fraction of a second, I suddenly changed my Self-Image to resemble one of those proficient skiers I watched on TV. I jumped slightly, turned my skis about ninety degrees to the hill, leaned slightly uphill and watched the snow fly as I came to a complete stop, never falling down. All I saw in my mind was that I was one of these downhill skiers I watched on television. I performed consistently with what I believed to be true about my environment and myself.

Now that's not to say I made it down the hill with no accident. I turned to my friend who was following me. As I started to walk, I raised my downhill ski, smiled with a big grin on my face, chest pushed out, waved to my friend and hollered, “How was that, Bob?”

Then it happened! I did the splits and spent the next six weeks in a splint with torn ligaments in my left leg. Nobody told me not to raise my downhill ski like that.

Anyway, that's how my Imagination changed my Self-Image so I could stop on skis, without even thinking about how to do it. If I had given the slightest thought to

what to do, what the penalty will be if it doesn't work, or have the slightest doubt in my mind, I would probably have gotten wrapped around a tree.

Scientists demonstrate how the nervous system reacts to the Imagination. In one typical experiment, electrodes that measure muscular movement are hooked to the subjects' forearms. The subjects are instructed to imagine lifting ten-pound weights in their hands without moving. Even though the movement is only imagined, there is a sharp rise in electrical activity as their mental Computers send messages through their nervous systems.

If you close your eyes and picture a large square, your eyes will move, tracing the outline of the nonexistent square.

This information provides a valuable resource for improving your golf game. You can program your mental Computer and Autopilot by visualizing and imagining ideal strokes and putts. Your Imagination can break down barriers you have imposed on yourself with a negative Self-Image.

How to Run a Mile in Under Four Minutes

An interesting event took place in 1954 that illustrates how one person can open the gates of new endeavors.

Until the mid 1950, no athlete had ever run a mile in less than four minutes. The generally held belief was that it was humanly impossible. No one ran a mile in under four minutes because everyone believed it was impossible: everyone, except for a British doctor named Roger Bannister. Dr. Bannister refused to accept the limitation assumed by runners throughout the world. He believed it was possible and he believed that he was capable. He developed the Self-Image of someone capable of performing this feat. On May 6, 1954, in Oxford England, Dr. Bannister became the first person in recorded history to break the barrier – he ran the mile in 3 minutes, 59.4 seconds, setting a new world record. He believed in himself and, by changing his Self-Image, he made the impossible happen. Today, Sir Roger Bannister is just one of hundreds who have exploded past that 4-minute obstacle, but he will long be remembered as the first, the trailblazer, and the visionary who broke down the barrier and showed the world that obstacles are only as powerful as people's belief in them.

Today, running a mile in less than four minutes is expected of world-class champions. However, until 1954, it was believed to be impossible. Once Dr. Bannister broke the record, it was less than two months later when Australian athlete John Landy, set a new record of 3 minutes 58 seconds. Was it coincidence that John Landy was also able to break the four-minute barrier? No! Before Roger Bannister proved that it was possible, John Landy and other runners did not feel it was possible to break the four-minute mile barrier. They did not have a Self-Image of someone capable of doing it. After all, how often do you try to do the impossible? Once he felt the barrier possible to break, he was able to break free of that self-imposed limitation on runners. When he believed that it was possible, he was able to make it happen.

People create mental limitations based on their beliefs of what is possible and what is not possible for them. If those boundaries are identified, it may be discovered that they are false assumptions about their Self-Image. Once they are no longer accepted as facts, they no longer have to be obstacles.

A salesperson who believes he can never sell more than \$100,000 of product annually probably never will, even when an opportunity is dropped in his lap. A singer who believes she can't hit the high notes, can't. A runner who believes he can't run a mile in less than four minutes, won't. A golfer who believes that he will never shoot par, will never shoot par. You create the reality based on your beliefs. If you change your beliefs, you can change the reality.

Many golfers have false assumptions about the limits of their abilities. These form a high-handicap fence that holds them back. Because they believe they are not capable of better performance, it is entered in their Mental Computer. By changing their beliefs and reprogramming their Mental Computer, they can change their performance.

Soon, you will smell the aroma of freshly cut grass. You will see the cotton-like clouds in the sky, and you will hear the swish of your club as it cuts through the air.

About Making Comparisons

Your Imagination helps you can make choices by making comparisons. You make a decision to buy a red dress as opposed to a black dress by comparing, in your imagination, each dress on yourself. You hold it to your chin while standing in front of the mirror and smile as you imagine how you will look. By making comparisons in your imagination, you decide which make of car you will buy. You look at pictures in the beautiful brochures and make comparisons. “Would I be more comfortable in this car or that car”? You imagine yourself sitting in each of them. You also buy your golf equipment by making comparisons. “Let's see now, Jack won the Masters using this brand of ball, but Mary won the Dinah Shore Open using that ball. Which should I use?”

Throughout the day, your mind and the Imagination are in a constant state of making choices. They constantly compare information programmed in your mental Computer in your Subconscious Mind. When you are trying to select a dress, you have consciously made the decision that you do want a new dress. Now you ask yourself whether to buy a red or black dress. Your Computer tells you that from experience, you like the way you look in red, but it also tells you that men like the way you look in black. So now, you must decide whether to please yourself or please the men around you. You now have other choices and comparisons to make. “What's in it for me if I please myself or men around me?” Decisions . . . decisions . . . decisions.

That's the way it works; comparisons upon comparisons, upon more comparisons. A steady flow of comparisons constantly goes back and forth between your Imagination and your mental Computer.

When you imagine something, you are creating a visual image in your mind. The information used to create the image comes from your mental Computer. For example: If an architect wishes to design a house, he must first visualize (imagine) in his head what it should look like. Drawing on information from past experiences and other information in his mental Computer he will begin to “see” the completed house in his mind's eye. Throughout this process, he will be making comparisons with the house he visualizes and other houses that he has previously seen.

The more information you can program into your mental Computer by absorbing visual images, the sooner you will be playing better golf. As I said previously, one of the best ways to do this is by watching videos of golfers performing a perfect swing on video tape in much the same way I felt my nervous system reacting to the skiers I watched on TV before my first skiing experience.

Later, we will be applying this knowledge as you learn to visualize and retrieve information from your mental Computer. You will learn that making the right club selection and addressing the ball properly depend on making comparisons with experiences already programmed in your mental Computer.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

RULES OF THE MIND

The mind, like the rest of the world, operates under some very specific rules. When you learn these rules they will help you improve your shot-making skills.

Rule Number One:

Every thought or idea causes a physical reaction.

Your thoughts can affect all of the functions of your body. Worry triggers changes in the stomach. ANGER thoughts stimulate your adrenal glands and increased adrenalin in the blood stream causes many body changes. ANXIETY and FEAR thoughts affect your pulse rate. An overview of the best and quickest way to reprogram yourself is by first sitting down and let your mind wander until you are totally relaxed.

Ideas that have a strong emotional content almost always reach the subconscious mind, because it is the feeling part of the mind. Once accepted, these ideas continue to produce the same body reaction over and over again. In order to eliminate your bad golf habits, you must reach your subconscious mind and change the idea responsible for the reaction. One way to do this is by using subliminal tapes. Many are available on the internet.

Rule Number Two:

What the mind expects to happen tends to be realized.

The brain and nervous system respond only to mental images. It does not matter if the image is self-induced or from the external world such as live demonstrations, subliminal audio tapes, or video tapes. The mental image formed becomes the blueprint, and the subconscious mind uses every means at its disposal to carry out the plan.

We all know people who seem to have the “Magic Touch”. Besides having a positive mental attitude, they also have a **POSITIVE MENTAL EXPECTANCY!** Another way of stating it is **WE BECOME WHAT WE THINK ABOUT!**

Our golf is largely dependent upon our mental expectancy. Here is where subliminal messages can become the tool to remove negative attitudes and bring about a positive mental expectancy.

Rule Number Three:

Imagination is more powerful than knowledge.

This is an important rule to remember when using subliminal messages. **REASON IS EASILY OVERRULED BY IMAGINATION.** This is why some persons blindly rush into some unreasonable act or situation. Violent crimes based on jealousy are almost always caused by an overactive imagination. Subliminal messages can form images in the subconscious mind, and can remove, alter or amend old ideas and habits. If you form a mental picture of your ball going into the water or sand trap, you stand a good chance of going there. **KEEP ONLY POSITIVE IMAGES IN YOUR MIND.**

Rule Number Four:

Once an idea has been accepted by the subconscious mind it remains until it is replaced by another idea.

The companion rule to this is **THE LONGER AN IDEA REMAINS, THE MORE OPPOSITION THERE IS TO REPLACING IT WITH A NEW IDEA.** Once an idea has been accepted, it tends to become a fixed habit of thinking. This is how habits are formed. Your bad habits in golf began as a thought followed by the bad habit. Some people believe that at critical times they must have a drink of whisky or

a tranquilizer to steady their nerves so they can perform effectively. This is not correct, but the idea is there and it is a fixed habit of thought. There will always be opposition to replacing it with a correct idea. No matter how fixed the ideas may be or how long they have remained, they can be changed by subliminal messages. You can change your old golf habits and replace them with new ones.

Rule Number Five:

Each suggestion acted upon creates less opposition to successive suggestion.

A mental habit is easier to follow the longer it lasts unbroken. Once a habit is formed it becomes easier to follow and more difficult to break. In other words, once a suggestion has been accepted by your subconscious mind, it becomes easier for additional suggestions to be accepted and acted upon.

You may have developed bad golf habits which no doubt can be broken (all habits can be replaced). You must replace them with good habits as soon as possible.

Rule Number Six:

When dealing with the subconscious mind and its functions, the greater the conscious effort, the less the subconscious responds.

“Will Power” does not really exist! If you had insomnia, you've learned the law of reverse effect. This means, the harder you try the more difficult it becomes. The harder you try to go to sleep, the more wide awake you become. The rule is, “When dealing with the subconscious mind, TAKE IT EASY”. As your faith in your subconscious mind increases, you learn to “let it happen” rather than trying to “force it to happen.” Some people want to improve their golf so badly that they try to help it happen. This keeps the conscious mind active and any workable depth of relaxation becomes impossible.

The understanding and implementing of these mental laws will make your visualization sessions much more productive. I know you will do well.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

ABOUT IMAGERY

“What do we mean by imagery? For our purposes we are referring only to the dictionary meaning: “a mental picture of something not actually present.” For example, if I ask you to tell me how many windows there are in your house, you might close your eyes for a few moments and then come up with an answer. In order to count the number of windows, you will have to see the house in your mind's eye to construct a mental image or picture. Similarly, if we hear the name of a person whom we know very well, we will immediately experience an image of that person. You can easily picture your bedroom, and in a moment, you can see yourself hundreds or thousands of miles from home. Next, you can imagine being at work, reading some papers, and in a flash you can be in a log cabin, or on a sandy beach, or out with friends, and you can continue to slide effortlessly from scene to scene.”*

*From *In The Mind's Eye* by Arnold Lazarus, Ph.D., The Guilford Press, New York

Where Are Images Stored?

The brain is similar to an extremely intricate and dynamic computer that can record everything ever experienced by the five senses of taste, touch, sight, sound, and smell. These experiences are stored on the computer's “hard disk” only to be recalled by us at a future time. Dr. Wilder Penfield, a neurosurgeon from Montreal, and his associates, demonstrated some of the most dramatic evidence about the way in which the brain stores these experiences. While operating on a patient's brain he stimulated various parts with weak electrical currents and aroused imagery of past experiences. These images were visual or auditory, or both, and the same image could be evoked repeatedly by successfully stimulating the same spot.

“Thus it would seem that people, places, scenes, events, and innumerable personal happenings are recorded and filed away in our brain. Weak electrical stimuli applied to our exposed brain can elicit images, but so can millions of other stimuli.

The word “putting green” will evoke an image of the golf course and the word “driving range” calls up the image of a driving range if you stop to think about them for a moment. There are millions of random images that can cause you to create a

mental image. This material will show you how to conjure them up and how to put them to work for you.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

PRELIMINARY EXERCISES

Forming images in the mind is the surest way of learning to play better golf. In this section, I will describe a few exercises for you to practice. Today, the art of visualization is almost a lost art. I was seven years old in 1935. I grew up having to visualize, in the theatre of my mind, the Lone Ranger galloping across the plains. Tom Mix, the All American Boy, and Buck Rogers in the twentieth century were other favorites. We used to read a lot and had to use our imagination to visualize what we were reading. However, today, young children have no real need to create visual images in their heads. Everything is presented as visual images. Movies and television are the great culprits. You have no need to visualize anything. You see what the writers want you to see. All you see is what they see when they write the script. On the other hand, we all saw our own images when we heard the radio or read books. It was much more exciting imagining the Lone Ranger riding across the plains than it is on television today. That is not to say that television and the movies do not affect the nervous system; they do. Just watch a horror movie and see how your heart can be pumping faster as it releases adrenalin into you heart. In addition, note how the same thing happens when you experience a dream in the middle of the night. Dreams are no more than mental images formed in your mind (how or why they are formed is pure speculation today) but nonetheless, they affect the nervous just as surly as if the event was real.

Visual images bypass the critical, conscious mind and go directly to the subconscious mind where they are utilized later.

After daily practice of mental exercises for at least twenty-one to thirty consecutive days, your game will improve dramatically. I guarantee it. However, it is important to do this religiously. I have no doubt in my mind that if you were given thirty tickets for two hours of free driving range lessons that all had to be used up

within thirty days, you would probably be there for thirty consecutive days.

Practicing your mental game is no different. You will get out of it what you put into it.

Earlier, you read how Greg Louganis uses visual images to help his diving and how Mary Lou Retton visualizes before each routine. Many professional golfers visualize shots before executing them. You can do the same thing with your golf.

Here are some imagery exercises that can be used to increase your ability to form mental images in your mind.

Exercise 1. Putting

Sit down in a comfortable manner in a quiet place. Take several deep breaths and relax. Now close your eyes and imagine yourself on a practice putting green. See yourself walking to hole number one. Now see yourself stroking the ball. Watch it rolling toward the cup. If you miss the cup, see yourself placing another ball on the green and putting it to the cup. Repeat this exercise until you sink every ball. Go to hole number two and repeat the same exercise until you have gone through all the holes. Some people can complete the entire series of holes in this way. See how far you can get. As you keep visualizing yourself making those putts, what happens? Do some balls miss the cup? Do the images become hazy? Examine your own pattern, and each time you do this exercise, try to obtain more and more clarity. A five-minute session is sufficient.

Exercise 2. Driving the Ball

Close your eyes and imagine yourself on the first tee about to drive the ball. See yourself teeing up your ball. Now see yourself taking a practice swing. See the ball teed up in line with your feet. Now see yourself bringing the club back on the back swing. See your hips turning into the shot as the club moves downward and striking the ball. See your head staying down until you have driven the ball. Now see yourself looking at your ball as it flies through the air. Again, a total of about five-minutes of practice time is sufficient.

Exercise 3. The Common Object

“Take any common object, a real object, any handy item, and examine it carefully. (You can look at any object—a stone, a piece of fruit, a bottle, a pencil, a watch, anything available.) Keep looking directly at the object until you are very familiar with it. Study it closely. Now close your eyes and imagine that you are still looking directly at the object. Picture it as clearly as you can. Study the image as you did when you were examining the real object. Keep picturing the object. Now open your eyes. Re-examine the real object. Compare the difference between the image and the actual object. Look closely at the object. Are there any features that you did not register in the image. Close your eyes and repeat the exercise.

It is important to stress that the use of imagery is not new. French, German, and Italian practitioners have applied ingenious imagery techniques for the last twenty-five years.”*

*From *In The Mind's Eye* by Arnold Lazarus, Ph.D., The Guilford Press, New York.

Mental imagery provides the opportunity to practice many new skills and to develop different attitudes and traits. Naturally, a real event differs considerably from one that is merely imagined. However, there are a sufficient number of neurons (nerve endings) in common between those affected in the actual situation and those affected by one's image of that situation, so that reciprocal interaction takes place. In other words, neuro-physiologically, if you look at a pencil, the nerve pathways from your eyes to your brain and your central nervous system enable you to register the meaning, the perception, and the experience of seeing the pencil. Now if you close your eyes and imagine the pencil as vividly as possible, the image of the pencil will stimulate many thousands of the same neurones that were involved when registering the actual pencil. Thus, if you picture yourself behaving or performing in a certain manner, it will overlap with your performance in the real situation. A strong imagination generates the actual event.

Studies have shown that if a golfer imagines himself driving a ball or making a difficult putt repeatedly, his actual game will improve. Similarly, the mental practice of picturing oneself successfully throwing darts at a target will improve one's aim in the real situation. This applies to all specific skills. If you practice something in

imagination, it is bound to have an effect on the real situation. Everybody should become aware of this since we all use it from time to time. I am advocating a deliberate and systematic excursion into “goal rehearsal” in order to facilitate numerous skills.

This is not to minimize the importance of actual practice. To claim that it is unnecessary to perform actual tasks, but that the mere imagined rehearsal will guarantee mastery, is absurd. If you are already good at something, the practice of goal rehearsal can make you even better. Most people find that their imagery is best stimulated if preceded by some deliberate muscle relaxation while stretched out on a comfortable bed or couch, or mat. You have to practice imagery exercises diligently (as diligently as you might go to the driving range) and regularly if you wish to obtain appreciable results. Albert Einstein once commented, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” This material will enable you to use your imagination in order to acquire greater knowledge, better health, and personal fulfillment.

Each shot you make in golf requires a slightly different swing. Here are several ways to mentally practice the swing used with the driver. In each instance, you should have a video tape of someone performing the swing. So begin by video taping all the golf swings you see on TV where the driver is used. The best ones are those that show the golfer swinging in slow motion. If you have access to two video tape players, you can create a video tape showing the same swing repeatedly for perhaps a thirty-minute tape. If you don't have a tape player you will need to see the same swing over and over again while rewinding your tape after each view of the swing. Watching the swing repeatedly is the secret here.

Do you remember when you first took up golf? Do you remember how the instructor demonstrated how to swing the club? As you watched the instructor, your nervous system was ever so slightly being programmed to carry out the swing. Then what happened? You were given the club and were expected to swing in the same way. All this was done on a conscious level. As you practiced, you may have been swinging the club the wrong way. Every time you drove the ball, your nervous system may have been receiving the wrong message. It's now time to re program your

nervous system by looking at the “teacher” on video tape over and over until you get it down pat.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

ABOUT JOEY-O

Remember how I told you about my skiing experience and how my nervous system was programmed simply by watching skiing on television? That's exactly what will happen to your golf swing as you repeatedly watch a video tape of a perfect swing.

The most effective and quickest way to program yourself is watching a professionally-created video tape of a professional golfer performing the swing using the driver.

I highly recommend the video tape called Picture Perfect Golf by Joey “O”. Golf Professional Paul Azinger said Joey is the best ball striker he has ever seen. “The most solid ball striking I’ve ever seen,” he said.

Paul Azinger, while watching Joey drive a golf ball consistently over 250 yards straight down the middle of the fairway, once said, “If you have never seen Joey-O you are missing something worth watching”.

Using many of same mental techniques described in this book, Joey can drive the ball standing on a two-foot diameter ball, sitting atop a six foot unicycle, a teeter-board, using a rubber shafted club that wraps around his neck, or a ball rolling down a slight incline, and even standing on one hand. (You can see a Joey performing some of his shots by visiting his website at <http://www.joeyogolf.com/> .

You can get a copy of Joey-O performing the same swing he uses to consistently drive the ball over two hundred yards. The tape has several minutes of him swinging in slow motion so you can watch him in lieu of having to create your own tape. This is the surest and best way to program your nervous system. Go to visiting his website at <http://www.joeyogolf.com/>. To see his exciting shots.

The Green Bay Chronicle said, “Joey-O was so phenomenal that the touring pros halted their practice sessions to watch, laugh, and shake their heads in amazement.”

You can also use subliminal audio tapes to be used as you watch TV, read the paper, do the dishes, or any other job. You don't have to pay attention to the tape. It sends messages right to your subconscious mind.

Whether you make your own tape, or get one somewhere else, it is necessary to repeat the mental training exercises for at least twenty-one days. Scientific research has demonstrated that it takes twenty-one days to program your nervous system to perform a physical act by visualizing it. The time you invest will be less expensive, less time consuming and more rewarding than any other improvement technique. You must be sincerely dedicated to improving yourself. Make the commitment, make the effort, then enjoy the results! I know you will do well.

Closing Remark

In closing, let me tell you a story about the days past when I was a bowler. Believe me, it *does* apply to golf as well as any other physical activity.

I enjoyed seeing people bowl their first 200 game or their first 600 series. Sometimes a person had been trying to attain these scores for years and it finally happened. Once this goal is achieved, the subsequent 200 games or 600 series come on more regularly. Don't think for one minute this is all due entirely to better physical ability. In probably 99 out of 100 cases, the reason was that the bowler knew it is now possible for him to achieve those scores.

I recall bowling my first 700 series as if it happened yesterday. The previous week I had a two-game total of 522. I only needed to pick up the seven pin in the tenth frame to have my first 700 series. As I approached the foul line to make my delivery, I took over conscious control of my automatic pilot, thereby jamming it. The result was that I pulled the ball into the gutter. I left knowing that at least I had it in me to shoot 522 for the first two games. I made up my mind that I could repeat the score the following week.

My total after the first two games was 523, one pin better than the week before. I still needed a spare in the 10 frame and again I approached the foul line. I took a

moment and visualized myself all excited and feeling full of joy shooting my first 700. This time, I left myself on automatic pilot, picked up my spare, and shot 706. I was no longer shooting for the impossible as the others came much easier. Your golf scores will also come easier as you visualize yourself golfing better and better.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

TO BETTER GOLF

Before going into this chapter, I want you to become aware of one thing. As you read, there is a great possibility that you will become uncomfortable and perhaps even smile to yourself a little. Certain examples will "hit home" and arouse feelings within you. Some people have said, "Boy that's me", referring to certain examples. **READ THESE PARTS OVER AGAIN.** They have special meaning to you. Try to understand exactly what they say so you can work on them during the exercises in the next chapter. By now, I hope it is clear to all of you reading this book that:

1. We are all goal-seeking individuals operating through the use of our computer and automatic pilot.
2. We all carry in our heads a Self-Image of ourselves and are constantly in a state of proving and substantiating this image.
3. Our imagination acts as an interpreter between our computer and our automatic pilot.
4. We can program our computer through the use of our creative imagination.

This is all fine you say; all we have to do is leave ourselves on automatic and we can do better. Up to this point, this could never be truer. There is however-one-little-problem. This problem is perhaps one of the biggest roadblocks to better golf you will ever encounter. If you can ever overcome this one problem, I guarantee your stroke average will fall overnight. I don't want everyone of you to get excited, because discovering this roadblock will perhaps become the most difficult part of your better golf. Stated simply, it is this: *The inability to define your goals and overcome outside forces is the greatest roadblocks to better golf.*

Let The Kid Play

To make my point I must use examples I wrote about in my book BOWL WITH YOUR HEAD. The same principals apply to golf. Sometimes when a person is rolling at a single pin, ostensibly to make a spare, he is actually trying to miss this pin. In this case, his goal is really to miss the pin instead of hitting it.

Let's put it another way: if you are playing with 10 children and find that one of them refuses to play according to the rules, what do you do? The answer is simple. You might sit him down on a bench somewhere and remove him from the game. Or, stated another way, you simply will not let him participate-you won't let him play. Let's apply this type of thinking to bowling.

You have a solid pocket hit and leave a 10 or a 4 pin. On your spare shot, you miss your spare completely. Let the kid play! Don't keep him out of the game because he didn't fall. Punish him by making him play. A man I know who seldom made his spares is now making them with clock-like precision. It wasn't that he was physically unable to make them, but he was punishing the "kid" by not letting him play.

I have seen golfers take bogeys, double-bogeys, and triple-bogeys after the experienced TV commentators described the shot as being not too difficult. The ball was driven to the left or right of the fairway. "Let's go to Sam on the fairway", the commentator says. "Steve's ball is sitting up well on the grass. He has an easy shot to the green".

Steve addresses his ball and takes aim. He hits the ball, which goes flying directly into a sand trap. Stroke 3 goes over the green. On in four and two putts for double bogey. I am suggesting that as the bowler did not let the kid play, the golfer is mad at his ball and is punishing it. Don't laugh for one minute. Read below how I once won a \$200.00 bet by betting Jack Nicklaus will miss the green while hitting a short iron. Like bowlers, the golfer must also define his goal of keeping his ball in play.

Professional Golfers Are No Different

Even professional golfers sometimes fail to define or understand their goals. Nobody is immune from these roadblocks to better performance. It was the 1970

Bryon Nelson Classic. Arnold Palmer had already completed his round with a 274. If Jack Nicklaus shoots four on the last hole, he wins with a 273. A five ties him with Palmer at 274 and leads to a sudden death playoff.

His drive landed at the base of a tree on the left of the fairway. He only had one choice. He could chip to the fairway in two, on in three and hopefully a one-putt for a win. Not too impossible. Suddenly Jack picked up his ball and got a free drop in sight of the green. The TV commentator explained that since there was also a TV tower behind the tree and in Jack's line to the green, he was entitled to a free drop. The rule is that when a man-made object is in line with your ball and the green, you are entitled to a free drop in sight of the green. What a break for Jack! I was watching this in the bar of the bowling establishment when I pulled out two-hundred dollars and bet that Jack would miss the green. I believe he was using a nine iron.

How many of you are willing to bet against Jack missing the green while hitting a nine iron? Not too many I think.

In the blink of an eyelash, I reasoned that Jack was the caliber of golfer who would not want to win on a fluke. I reasoned that from where he got his free drop, he could possibly make birdie or even his four to win. That would mean that his victory would have come on a fluke. Jack would rather win because of his play than on a fluke. I reasoned that he unconsciously wanted to make a five. If he hit the green in two he would have to three putt, a most unlikely scenario. The only answer was to miss the green. We watched as his ball went flying over the green in two, on in three and a two-putt gave him a 274 for the tie.

On TV Jack said something like "I never hit an iron so bad and so far in all my life". I don't think he was aware of the roadblock keeping him from making his four.

He then went on to win in sudden death.

Truly "professional" golfers do not want to win tournaments on flukes. Take for instance Steve Scott who perhaps may have won the 1996 US Amateur Championship if he had not been so "professional". At the 36th hole, Tiger Woods marked his ball, which was in Scott's line of putt. In an act of true sportsmanship, Scott reminded Woods to return his ball marker to its original position. If Woods had

failed to do this, he loses the hole, the match, and his third championship. (Tim Hogarth, the eventual winner of the Amateur Public Links final, lost a hole when he failed to replace his marker.) Later, on television, Scott was praised for this act of sportsmanship. He responded that if he won the championship, he didn't want to win it on a fluke.

It's Poker Time

Let's take another example to illustrate how important but difficult, it is to define goals. Jack is playing poker in the local card room several times a week and seems to enjoy himself. If I should ask him why he plays, he tells me he plays so he can possibly make a few dollars. I ask him how much he can make in one night if all goes well. He says, "About 30 or 40 bucks". I then say to him, "OK, I will give you \$40 if you don't play tonight." One would think that if his goal was to make money, he would be thrilled at not having to "work for his money", or even take a chance of losing his own. He may take the money but he would not be happy, he would still have the urge to play. His main purpose for playing has not been satisfied. He may then say, "Well, I like to play for the fun of it". "So let's play for matches," I say. "Like heck," he replies",that's not fun."

Tests conducted along these lines with compulsive gamblers have shown that when given the money not to play, they sometimes will play anyway if they think they can get away with it. They will not play" just for the fun of it" as they say, because there is no risk involved. He really doesn't know why he is driven to gambling in the same way many people do not know why they want to golf. Psychologists will tell you there are many outside forces pushing and pulling a compulsive gambler. He is directed toward a goal that he cannot define, such as self-punishment, self-defeat, expressing hostility toward authority, emotional involvement, etc. The reasons are numerous and can be discussed in a whole book by itself. It will become necessary for you to try to understand exactly why you desire to golf.

How To Lose Seventy-Dollars

Let me give you an example of how these outside forces, and the lack of being able to pre define a goal, affected my bowling to the extent that I lost \$70 to someone

I can usually defeat with no trouble at all. Read this little incident over a couple of times so you can better understand it. It is very important that you understand about these forces and goals when you golf.

One evening, I was bowling against a man I will refer to as John. He and I bowled for about an hour and a half. When we finished, he had lost \$70 to me. During this time, however, no money changed hands. He simply "owed it to me." The rest of the evening, I heard from several reliable sources that this man never pays debts as he seldom has any money. The next day I walked into the lanes and there was John. I asked him for my money and he said, "Let's bowl; I'll pay you when we finish". We began bowling and boy did I stink! I never bowled so badly in all my life. If he shot in the 170's I shot in the 160's; if he shot 200, I shot 190; when he shot 150, I shot 140, etc. It wasn't long before he and I were exactly even. He owed me nothing and I owed him nothing. Having finished, I then rolled a 279 game! Outside forces? You'd better believe it! My failure to define my goal again. My real goal on this particular day, although unconscious, was to lose, to shoot just under what he shot. I would rather lose on the lanes than to have someone owe me money and not pay me. The outside force was the desire to get even. Let's say I was like an airplane flying high in the sky while on automatic pilot. Suddenly the plane hits a thunder and lightening storm and the compass goes haywire. An electrical storm was the outside force affecting the efficiency of the automatic control system. Like a pilot who may not understand what this force is and leaves his plane on automatic, I too was not operating at peak efficiency since I was not aware at the time what forces were working on me. I was not aware of my desire to lose. These forces that hinder our bowling performance are of course, psychological in nature. They are forces whose existence we are seldom aware of. However, once we become aware of their existence and can understand them, we will begin to make strides toward better golf.

How To Get Sympathy And Attention

One evening, I was sitting in a bowling alley watching a group of bowlers. As I watched a certain young man, with a girl that I later found out was his girlfriend, I became amused at how many spares he was missing. I realized he rolled a pretty fair ball but he could not make a spare. I immediately began looking for a clue that might

tell me why he was really missing his spares. I was convinced he could make them if he really wanted to. Suddenly it came to me and like an answer to a riddle or a solution to a magic trick, once you know the answer, it is simple. I went down to talk to this guy and introduced myself to him. I explained to him about the book I was writing and asked him if I could help him understand something so he could make his spares.

I don't have to tell you how overjoyed he was at the thought of having his bowling improved. I began by asking him why he is bowling (what I was really asking him was to define his goals). He told me he came down to the lanes with another couple and his girlfriend to have fun and that naturally they wanted to see how much they could score. You should have seen the look on his face when I told him I thought the reason he was here was simply to get love, sympathy, and attention from his girlfriend; that he was using bowling simply as a tool to get this. He must have thought I was some kind of a nut until I pointed out to him that every time he missed his spare, his girlfriend was all over him and giving him what he was after. I made him understand this and that he could not have both while bowling. He was not to use bowling as a tool. After he re-defined his goals, namely to knock down pins, his bowling improved tremendously. How many of you golfers are playing for reasons other than that of playing well? How many of you are unaware of your own unconscious goals when you go golfing? People will golf and as far as they are concerned at the moment, they are doing the best they can. Immediately, however, the question arises "the best they can do at what?", shooting par or otherwise? Naturally, the answer is "the best they can at attaining their goal, whatever it might be" .

How To Bowl Against A Ghost

A young lady I was speaking to one day, told me she had been bowling for nine years and she is just not good enough to bowl any better. She told me other people were just naturally better than she was. I talked with her for some time and it became apparent to me that this lady had a very good inferiority complex. She felt that she could not do things as well as other people could. Her goal then, when she was bowling, was not to see how good she could bowl but to prove what she imagined to

be true about herself. She was trying to see how badly she could bowl. Although this lady carried an average of only 134, I decided to carry out a simple experiment. I told her there was another lady who bowled in another house that I would like her to bowl against. I told her I would find out what scores this other lady bowled last week and that she would shoot against these scores. The following week I "made up" scores of 179, 168, 193, and told this lady these are the scores she would have to beat. Here is what she bowled against these" scores:" 172, 163, 185. Not bad for a 134 average bowler. Still she was "not good enough" to beat this phantom bowler. I smiled, however, when she told me, "See, I told you I couldn't do it".

The point is that she was physically capable of bowling better. My problem then became that of convincing her and getting her to believe in her own ability that she was as good as other people instead of consistently proving her Self-Image to herself. Once she began to change her Self-Image, her average began to rise and when I last saw her, she was carrying a 166 average. I believe this accounts for the reason that a low average bowler can raise his average by simply bowling with better bowlers. If he were the type of bowler to shoot just under what his fellow players are shooting, he would be better off shooting just under the 190's than he would be shooting just under the 160's. Also, high handicap golfers can lower their handicap if constantly playing with low handicap golfers.

Play Golf To Win

Some golfers play as a means of seeking self punishment. They will consistently play badly, while knowing deep down inside that they can do better. They are beat before they start. I once read an article about how people will go to Las Vegas and gamble for only one reason: to lose. A very good friend of mine got caught in this trap, although not too severely. She is the type of person who is always very proficient at whatever she does. That is, however, in all activities in which she is not competing with her husband. Bowling is the one activity at which she was not proficient. I would take her aside and have her bowl when her husband wasn't around and boy what a difference. Take away the possibility of her showing up her husband and did she ever bowl! There is that outside force again jamming her automatic guidance system. Her desire to lose and not to show up her husband was creating this

force. In this case, I set it up so that if there were any showing up of anybody, it would be my fault. I was responsible and not her.

I talked with her and her husband and told them that by simply counting to 10 and my stroking her arm in a certain manner, she would be unable to bowl other than excellent. I sure got sarcastic remarks, however, from her husband as he was constantly being "buried" by his wife. This is the reason I say that people can golf much better than they now do if they will ask themselves what it would mean to them if they would suddenly improve.

Don't Golf For Results

One of the biggest roadblocks to better golf is to worry about where your ball will land after being hit, or whether it will go into the hole when you putt. Your goal in golf is not to hit the ball in any particular direction. Your goal is simply to strike the ball. Once you have accomplished this successfully, the ball will end up where you want it. Golfing must be between your backs wing and striking the ball, that's all.

Let's follow the motion of a golfer, as he is about to make a shot. First, he stands behind his ball looking down the fairway. Golfers tell me that's to pick the direction in which they want to hit the ball. I have no problem with that. You'd better take a stance toward the direction in which you want to hit the ball. After you take the proper stance, your goal should be only to attain the goal of striking the ball. The golfer should be like the missile on the launch pad waiting for the signal to attain its goal, that of destroying an enemy aircraft. He should be like Iron Byron who can consistently drive a ball 300 yards down the center of the fairway and plus or minus three yards off center. (Iron Byron is a mechanical device used by the USGA to test equipment.)

While watching professional golfers on TV, this is what I see: The golfer stands behind his ball, spotting the direction in which he wants to drive the ball. He checks the wind conditions. Good so far. He then addresses the ball, looks down the fairway, shuffles his feet again, another look down the fairway, backs off, stands behind his ball again, another look down the fairway, addresses his ball, shuffles his feet, takes his backswing, starts his downward swing, strikes the ball, and watches it as it (hopefully) splits the fairway.

Nobody will ever convince me all this shuffling and looking is necessary.

Why is it that some golfers, who shoot no worse than others, do not go through all those gyrations? Iron Byron does not do it and you should not.

We are not machines you protest. But to become a good golfer you'd better be close to one. You should concentrate more on just striking the ball consistently and in the same way each time instead of worrying in which direction you want the ball to travel. Want to draw the ball? Hit a draw shot consistently the same way each time.

Can you imagine a juggler of flaming torches concentrating on throwing his torch up the same height each time? I have spoken with jugglers who tell me they operate like a machine without conscious thought or effort. Their goal is simply to juggle. Playing the piano is the same thing.

On a recent trip to China, I watched an old lady kicking something like a bean bag into the air, first with one foot and then the other. After a few kicks, she kicked one over her head toward her backside. Without looking over her shoulder, she kicked it back to her front side using the heel of her foot. Amazing! This woman was a true machine.

You also can become a machine if you practice striking the ball consistently the same way without worrying in which direction you want the ball to travel. As the club is on the downswing, you had better not have your mind on the direction you want the ball to travel. There is a saying that trust is a must. You'd better trust that when you strike the ball it will travel in the direction it should, given the proper stance you took when you addressed the ball. You cannot change from your goal of striking the ball, to wanting to drive the ball in a particular direction. You just cannot do it that fast. You must remain on automatic throughout the delivery.

Once you fix your goal firmly in your mind (striking the ball) you have to follow through without interruption. Remember this, a ball struck in the same manner, will always end up in the same place. If you don't believe that, ask Iron Byron. The only factors that will change the result are wind, humidity, air density etc.

Trying to strike your ball when thinking of where you want it to land, is like a driver of a car making a right-hand turn while looking to the left. I witnessed an example of this in a professional bowling tournament. A particular bowler I was watching needed only an eight-pin count after making his spare in the 10th frame for a win. As he released the ball, he started thinking results. He tried to steer the ball into the head pin. An expert bowler should know that the more you try to steer the ball by “topping” it, the less it will curve into the pins. That is exactly what happened to this bowler. He tried to steer the ball and left the two, four, five, and eight pins.

He later told me that he knew all he had to do was to hit the head pin and he would win. That is where he lost the game. What he should have been thinking about was, "All I have to do is roll my ball over a particular spot for a win." Notice how he was thinking in terms of results. He was "putting on the roof before the foundation was laid”.

Don't Be The Bad Guy

A woman once told me, "I imagine the people on the other team will not like us as much if we win from them". This started me thinking and I began asking a few questions. It is surprising what people will tell you privately when they know they will not be ridiculed for feeling the way they do. I was amazed at how many people feel this way. I haven't tried to understand why people feel this way. If a person wants to "play act" the part of a "good guy”, that is his business. My purpose is to help him feel and understand that good guys do bowl well and do win games. In the next chapter, I will show you how you can re program yourself from that of a good guy who loses games to a good guy who wins games. If your team still wins games in spite of the fact that you bowl poorly, you can always say to your opponents, "Don't blame me, look how little I bowled”. It is the easy way out, but it will never improve your bowling, or golf.

This same attitude could have cost Davis Love III the 1997 PGA Championship. Some players wondered if one of the best-liked golfer on tour had the killer instinct to win. He was playing the final round with his friend Justin Leonard. "All day long, I couldn't look at Justin," he said. "I wanted to beat him so bad, but I didn't want to look at him and see my friend”.

Golf And Have Fun

A friend of mine mentioned how he took up bowling to "get away from it all" one night a week. He was referring to responsibilities of home life, the yelling of the kids, etc. He was a 172 average bowler but always felt something was keeping him from improving. This something or "outside force" was working on him, keeping him from operating at peak efficiency. After talking with him on a few occasions, it became clear that he felt guilty about "running out" as he put it, on his wife and kids. I spoke with his wife and found out she was thrilled that he could enjoy himself like this. After this reassurance from his wife, his average rose steadily. What was happening here was that he would bowl two good games and come back with a bad third one. He enjoyed himself but felt the need to be punished for "running out", and was unconsciously punishing himself by bowling badly in the third game. You have probably seen many golfers like this. You can almost feel the self-punishment they are inflicting upon themselves with bad shots and putts.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

RELAXATION

The secret of better golf lies in the ability of the golfer to re-program his computer. It's like a professional computer operator re-programming a computer after a student of computers has unsuccessfully tried the same programming.

When we were young, information from your mother, or other various sources fed into your computer, are still in there, however distorted. For example, "Be nice to others or they won't like you". This kind of information is still sometimes in there and you are still being nice to other people by letting them win at golf, thus hindering the proficiency of your own game.

In addition, when you were a child your programming went something like this: You failed to stand on top of the chair and fell off, whereas mother gave you sympathy. You failed at stacking your building blocks and mother again gave you sympathy. Equating failure with receiving sympathy, you got bad grades in school. Again wanting sympathy, you failed to make your spares and you bowled badly. In

other words, your computer tells you that one way to get sympathy is to fail, the same way a computer tells an engineer the best way to build a particular bridge is with 8" steel girders.

Our minds work in strange ways. Our automatic pilot (heart, muscles, nerves, etc.) will react only in accordance with information fed to it from our computer system.

If your computer for example says: "If you stop smoking, you will gain weight", it must follow that if you do stop smoking you will gain weight. However, this is not necessarily so. It is only true if you imagine you will gain weight. If you imagine that you will not-you won't.

A woman expects, through programming (hearing other women talk), that she will have labor pains when she delivers her baby. The pains will come because she expects them to come. A person will feel pain when having a tooth pulled because he expects to have pain. We are aware, however, that more and more women are delivering babies without pain, and many dentists are pulling teeth without the use of anesthetic by using hypnosis.

Much as I would like to refrain from using this particular term, "hypnosis", I find myself forced to. This is a term most of us are familiar with, and it is the reason people can render themselves immune to pain. You will notice I said *render themselves*. Any reputable hypnotist will tell you that he hypnotizes no one. His subjects hypnotize themselves. The hypnotist simply acts as a catalyst in the same manner as this book acts as a catalyst to improve your game. The only reason a person under hypnosis will keep his hand over his head, unable to bring it down, is because he has been told by the hypnotist that he can't, and he believes what he is told is true. The only reason a man I hypnotized was unable to lift a pencil off the table is because he believed what I told him was true. Hypnosis is simply "believing without question".

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

TRY THIS EXPERIMENT

I mentioned earlier that although hypnosis is much faster, you do not need the services of a hypnotist to perform better. You can accomplish any feats performed under hypnosis by yourself using your creative imagination. The following experiment will prove this.

Asks a friend to close their eyes. Then ask:

“Can you pretend for me that you cannot open your eyes”?

When you get a yes answer, proceed with the following direction:

“Keep pretending that you cannot open your eyes. And as you do, try hard to open them. You will find that the harder you try the tighter they close”.

Watch the person’s eyelids as they try to open their eyes. You can often see them twitching as they try hard to open their eyes. If by chance they do open their eyes, you can tell them that they are pretending that they *can* open their eyes, instead of pretending that they *cannot* open them. Now say:

“I will count to three and your eyes will open. 1, 2, 3, now let them open”

Their eyes will now open.

This little demonstration can usually be done by anyone. It demonstrates Rule 2 of the mind that: *What the mind expects to happen tends to be realized.* If you expect that you can golf better, *you will.*

If a woman accepts the fact, without question, that she can deliver a baby without pain, she probably will not experience it. In the same manner, if you believe, without question, that you can golf better, you will improve your game tremendously.

It is necessary for you to blank out of your mind any thoughts whatever about your bad games. You do this in only one way: by constantly thinking about the better times. As long as your mind is occupied by your better games, it will be impossible to also be thinking about your bad moments. (Try thinking about two things at the same time. IMPOSSIBLE)

When we worry about possible unfavorable results, we generally experience feelings of anxiety or become very apprehensive. In a sense, we are experiencing the same emotions in advance of a particular happening. The same holds true about our golf. We have to see ourselves winning a game, or see ourselves playing "way over our heads" and experience the feelings that go with these.

I believe that instead of being on the driving range between rounds of a tournament, a golfer would do himself well if he had a video of himself taken while shooting his better games. He would listen to the commentators praising his shots, or listening to the roar of the crowd. The libraries of the TV stations would be a good source of tape. He can, using modern technologies, also start recording his own tapes.

When you feel you are a better golfer, you will play like a better golfer.

When the feeling is strong enough, you will become unbeatable. When you experience that feeling of winning and becoming a better golfer, your automatic guidance system will become geared for you to successfully carry out your mission.

Do not try too hard. If you cannot capture the feeling of being a more proficient golfer during your first attempts, do not become discouraged. You may have outside forces working against you, but these will take care of themselves as you keep on practicing. It is similar to writing down a telephone number and writing it down incorrectly. You then may write down the correct number over the incorrect one, not once or twice but several times until the correct one is predominant, although written in the same place.

Likewise, as we feed more and more positive feelings into our computers, the more the negative ones will be pushed into the background, so keep feeding. Keep your goal in mind, that of being unbeatable. That of being the most proficient golfer around.

Science has proven that it takes about 21 days to program our computer.

It is obvious therefore that you must practice for a 30-minute period for at least 21 consecutive days. I, however, recommend that even after that time, you practice as often as you can for at least 30 minutes each session.

Keep seeing yourself striking the ball in such a manner as to cause it to "split" the center of the fairway. When you next go golfing, forget about how to golf altogether. Don't consciously think you must do this or you must do that. This will only cause you to "jam" your automatic guidance system. Let your guidance system direct you automatically as an automatic guidance system will better direct an airplane to its target or goal.

Have you ever noticed how a person will get in a slump? The harder he tries to get out of it, the worse he gets. What he is doing is consciously trying too hard and jamming his automatic guidance system.

I remember bowling one night with some friends. This one lady was in such a slump and said to me, "I don't know what I'm doing wrong. I've tried to correct everything but nothing works." I explained to her that the harder she tries, the more difficult it will be for her to pull herself out of this, so I asked her to quit thinking at all, just to bowl with a devil-may-care attitude. She did, and she started to score again.

When it becomes obvious that professional bowlers have lost a game, they begin throwing more strikes and making more spares. They sometime seem to be getting five, six, or even seven marks in some games, instead of two or three. What causes this phenomenon is usually that the bowler begins to bowl with the same devil-may-care attitude as the lady did. They begin to "free-wheel" the ball. They simply quit "jamming" their automatic guidance system by conscious effort and simply let their built-in automatic guidance system do the job for them.

They are not as tense anymore because there is no longer a penalty involved, such as losing the game.

Try this sometime and see how well it works. If you are not playing too well, get your mind off your game as much as you can. Assume the attitude of not giving a dang whether you make a good or bad shot. You will notice that when you assume this attitude, you are not concerned with any penalty involved, thus releasing you of any tension. You will also find that you are not giving any conscious thought to what

you are doing, thereby letting your automatic guidance system do the job better for you.

It's no wonder you will sometimes see professional bowlers on T.V. bowl some pretty low scores. Those capable of shooting 230 and 240 are now shooting 175 and 180--some even 140. It's no wonder when you stop and realize the tension or pressure they are under. After all, the failure to perform in some of these cases can amount to the loss of thousands of dollars.

I recall bowling my second 300 game. It was on a Saturday night when I stopped by the lanes. As I got nearer and nearer to my 300, the more I started kidding with another bowler about how I should have put some money on this game. The fact was that I didn't, so we just kidded back and forth about the situation.

The point I'm making is that I was trying to take my mind off a 300 game as much as I could. I was doing this by kidding about a silly bet that I didn't make which represented a lesser penalty than the greater one of losing out on another 300 game. In this manner, I felt no tension whatever.

Many people ask me how they can tell if they have relaxed themselves to the point of becoming susceptible to their own suggestions. I tell them first to relax themselves and after they are completely relaxed, to begin counting to 10. They are to begin counting only after they give themselves a suggestion that goes something like this: *I am going to begin counting to 10, and, as I get to No 8, I will get an urge to swallow-I will not be able to resist this urge. As I reach eight and not before, I will swallow-I will then finish counting to 10 and open my eyes. One-my mouth is getting dry-two, my lips are getting drier-three, I'm getting the urge to swallow-four, my throat is becoming drier-five, the urge to swallow is getting stronger-six, I cannot resist the urge-seven, I must swallow-eight, (here you will automatically swallow), nine, my mouth is normal again-ten, I'm wide awake, and here you will be completely normal again. This works in much the same way as you did when you closed your eyes and could not open them in the experiment above.*

What you have done is to program your computer to do the task of swallowing. You have fed information into it to the effect that at the count of eight, it will direct

your automatic guidance system to perform a specific job, that of swallowing. This is no different from saying to yourself in a state of relaxation something like this: *"The next time I go golfing, I am not going to consciously think of how to strike the ball. I am going to address the ball and strike it without worrying about where it will land. I will not be concerned that there is a clump of trees on the left side of the fairway or a sand trap on the right. Nothing will bother me. As I address the ball, my ball."*

Don't try to memorize any words or sentences given here but instead, try to get the idea of what is said. It is not important that every word be exact. You may have your own suggestions that may work better for you.

Do not attempt to work too much on your form. It is more important to work on striking the ball, instead of where you want it to go. Look at some of today's professional golfers.

In conclusion, I would like to say that one of the most important ends to which you must work is believing you can do better, expecting you can do better, and imagining yourself as a more proficient golfer. After you believe and feel you have reached this point, the expected will follow. A low handicap golfer carries a low handicap because he expects it.

These ideas and exercises have helped many people to improve their golf and have helped them gain more fun from it. I know it can do the same for you.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

CONCLUSION

Having finished the second draft in preparation for this book, I became concerned about whether golfers would understand what I was saying. I wanted to be sure I was not getting too technical, especially when dealing with the Automatic Guidance System. Looking for answers to these questions, I gave copies of this book to approximately thirty golfers so they could evaluate it for me and perhaps ask questions of their own concerning the matter. On the following pages, I am presenting some of the questions asked along with my answers to them.

Q. I read your material last night and tried putting it into practice but it didn't work. Why?

A. You cannot expect anything to work immediately, especially something that requires either physical or mental practice.

I was visiting my nephew and became interested in the weight lifting set he had been given for his birthday. His goal was to improve his muscular development, you know-the Charles Atlas type. I remember glancing through the manual that came with the set, laying out a course to follow in order to gain maximum development. It started you out on some simple exercises using the minimum amount of weight and gradually worked you into the more difficult exercises using the maximum amount of weight.

Now you can imagine how little my nephew would improve his development if all he did were to read the instructions without actually performing the exercises.

In like manner, you can read all the books you want to on self-improvement but it will not do you one bit of good if you refuse to practice the exercises. People will practice physical exercises more than they will mental ones. They seem to think that working on mental improvement is an admission that their mental abilities are not what they should be and many people are not willing to admit this to themselves.

If you sincerely wish to improve your golf, you must improve from the mental as well as the physical side. If you spend, just twenty five percent of the time on your mental game as you do on your physical, it will be impossible for you not to improve.

Q. Why do you seem to use many examples that are not related to golf? A. The concept of a person having a computer and an automatic guidance system is not new. One of the greatest pioneers in this field was Norbert Weiner, Professor of Mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. During World War II he developed improvements in radar and guided missiles. He is credited with coining the term "Cybernetics" used by scientists today, when referring to automatic, self-controlled equipment.

In his book, *The Human Use of Human Beings*, Mr. Weiner writes-"Man is immersed in a world which he perceives through his sense organs. Information that

he receives is coordinated through the process of storage, collation, and selection. It emerges through effected organs, generally his muscles. II

What I am trying to show, by using examples apparently not related to golf, is that in our everyday lives, when we walk, drive an automobile, pick up a glass of water, dive, bowl, water ski, shoot a bow and arrow, or even when we climb ladders, we are applying the same principles as outlined in this book. Golf, from the physical side, need not be any more difficult than walking from your car to the first tee.

Q. It sounded to me like you said you should not think when playing golf. Did I read you correctly?

A. When golfing, you must always keep your goal in mind and your only goal should be to strike the ball. You must automatically strike the ball without being concerned on where it lands.

I'm sure you have seen some bowlers come very close to making some pretty difficult splits; for example, the 6-7 -1 0 or the 4-7-10. One man I used to bowl against once told me he would rather see me shoot at a ten pin, rather than one of these splits, as I would be pretty good at making them.

It is not too strange to see bowlers making these or at least come close to making them. Many bowlers, you will notice, will come closer to making these splits than they will come close to hitting the pocket. When one leaves these splits, he will immediately realize his chances of picking them up are pretty slim and he will not really be trying" too hard". He will simply pick out a spot he feels is necessary to convert the split and, leaving himself on automatic, will simply roll the ball. There is no loss involved for failing to perform, hence no tension. The bowler has already resigned himself to the fact that he is going to have an open frame. He would improve tremendously if he would assume this same attitude when rolling his first ball. And golfers will be better off if they assumed an attitude of relaxing and having fun.

Q. Why is it that every time I get a new driver, I seem to drive the ball better, and then suddenly I'm back in the same old rut again?

A. First of all you may be the type of person who does not want to take credit for doing anything good. You might not feel worthy of this. In addition, if this is the case, you will find some way to fail.

When you first get a new driver, it is no surprise to me that you would drive the ball better. You can then pass the credit for the good drives on to your new driver. You can say "look how good my drives are" . You realize quickly enough however, that you can fool yourself for only so long and you will soon fall back into acting consistent with your self image of being someone "not worthy to win". Your solution rests in your changing your Self-Image to that of a "winner" and you will then improve.

Another possibility is that when you first get your new driver, you do not know what it is going to do or how it is going to drive the ball, so you simply strike it to find out. After all-isn't this exactly what you are supposed to do?

One day, however, some outside forces are affecting your game and you try to take over conscious control of your automatic guidance system. You're now in trouble. You then lose confidence in your driver and it's back to the pro-shop. If this should happen to you, try working on your mental improvement as well as your physical.

Q. Why not try to shoot ten or twenty strokes below my stroke average from the beginning?

A. Let's get back to my nephew and his weight lifting equipment again.

If the instructions began by having him lift the maximum amount of weight, he would never do it, anymore than you could shoot too many strokes below your present stroke average. If this were required from the two of you, you would both become discouraged and quit. The instructions gradually raise the amount of weight in much the same manner as you should begin by shooting only a few strokes below your present stroke average and gradually increase.

When a fight manager sends his boxer into the ring for the first time, he does not send him against the champion. He begins by matching him against someone he feels he can defeat and gradually sends him against tougher and tougher opponents. In this

manner, the boxer gets not only the needed physical experience, but also the much required mental experience, namely that of gaining self confidence and building a self-image of being a winner. I believe the great Mohammad Ali was a man of this type. I believe many men were physically capable of "beating the pants off" of Ali but that they did not believe they were capable of this feat and so they didn't. I believe Ali "sold" himself on the fact that he was superior and that it was this belief that made him the fighter he was.

Q. Can you give me another example of how conscious thought or effort will "jam" your automatic guidance system?

A. As I pointed out in the beginning of the book, I am not writing a textbook on psychology or physiology. I have simply outlined the principles involved in order to make this book easy reading. I would, however, like to tell you about someone I know personally that took a station wagon automobile which happened to be laying on its side and single handedly stood it back on its four wheels. What makes it all the more remarkable is the fact that this was accomplished in sand and the man weighed no more than 165 pounds! There are not more than a handful of men alive who would be able to accomplish this feat of strength on hard pavement, let alone soft sand. What would happen first is that your computer would tell you this feat is impossible. You would know from past experience with heavy objects that you are not physically capable of doing this. You would be giving conscious thought to the situation and decide to forget about even trying.

This man, however, without thinking and with a goal fixed firmly in his mind, that of lifting the car from on top of his daughter that was pinned underneath during an accident, simply acted. As I said before-don't think how, just keep in mind what you want to accomplish, and let your automatic guidance system provide the means whereby you can succeed.

Q. Are you suggesting that the whole brain is just one large computer?

A. I am not saying this at all, any more than you can say an airplane is one large computer. An airplane has a computer within it in much the same manner as the brain has a computer within it.

For parts of the brain, the analogy is accurate enough, but as a whole organ, the human brain is so complex that the largest of computers and of the most advanced design could not equal its capacities.

In closing I would like to say to all of you readers who are sincerely interested in improving your game, keep practicing.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

© 2006 by Paul Bezaire

All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts or quotations for purposes of review, no part of this material may be reproduced in any form, or by any means, without the express written permission from the copyright holder. Making copies of this material, or any portion, for purposes other than your own use, is a violation of the United States copyright laws.

Other books by The Rebel

The Cybernetic Bowler, The Art of Cutting Back on the Smoking Habit, Pay No More Underserved Parking Tickets, Pay No more Undeserved Speeding Tickets, How I Sued PayPal and Won, The Rebel, Dissent and Civil Disobedience, How to Create your Own E-Books, First Empty your Cup, My Mom Has Cancer, and others.