

THE BIG IDEAS

Process Is Primary

Did I win?

It's 90% Mental

So give the mental side some love!

Mental Management®

What is it?

Pressure

It's normal and good.

Your Good Shots

Focus on them!

Rehearsal

+ That's like me.

Your Self-Image

Is key. How is it?



With Winning in Mind

The Mental Management® System

BY LANNY BASSHAM · MENTAL MANAGEMENT® SYSTEM © 2011 · 181 PAGES

“I am well aware that there are many fine self-improvement books available. Psychologists, motivational speakers, religious leaders and business professionals write them. A competitor writes this one. The Mental Management® System is not based on psychology; instead, it is 100% based on competition. I did my apprenticeship in the arena of Olympic pressure. My credibility is not based on the course I took in college; it's in my gold medals and the medals of my students. It's not theory; it's simply what works. My goal in this book is to share with you the mental techniques that I have discovered and used to win.”

~ Lanny Bassham from *With Winning in Mind*

This is another one of those books that I just happened to stumble upon and I'm glad I did. I picked it up as I was feasting on mental strength training books. It's *really* (!) good. (Stunningly good, in fact.)

[Lanny Bassham](#) is a world-class athlete turned mental training coach. He shares his wisdom from the perspective of a guy who has been there and done that in the competitive arena—winning an Olympic gold medal and a ton of other championships. (He's the third in medal count for the USA for all shooters.)

Lanny's also a great story-teller and a precise teacher. He's been at this for over four decades and it shows. He created what he calls the Mental Management® System and has trained everyone from PGA golfers and Olympic champions (and teams) to the FBI, Navy SEALs and Miss America contestants.

With Winning in Mind is the no-nonsense distillation of his Mental Management® System. It's *packed* with Big Ideas. If you're feeling it, I think you'll dig the book. Get it [here](#). Learn more about Lanny at www.mentalmanagement.com.

For now, let's take a quick look at a handful of my favorite Big Ideas!

PROCESS IS PRIMARY

“I suggested that instead of setting a goal to win Ben should goal set to make the process of playing well his primary focus. “Process is Primary” became a theme for the year. Ben's job while playing was to think about executing his mental and technical systems and not to think about winning. Scoring is a function of great execution, and winning is the result, but thinking about winning can pull your focus off of proper execution in a competition. Thinking about process is the answer.

In the fourth tournament of the year at San Diego's Torrey Pines course, Crane found himself just 30” from the cup on 18. The crowd knew Ben needed to make the putt for the win, but Crane had no idea. When the ball rolled in, his playing partner Ryuji Imada offered his hand in congratulations. Thinking this was just the customary handshake after the round, Ben did not realize he had won until Heather [his wife] ran on to the green.

“Are you interested in winning or helping others to win? If so, this book is written for you.”

~ Lanny Bassham

"NOTHING IS GOING TO CHANGE UNLESS YOU CHANGE YOURSELF FIRST."

~ Lanny Bassham

"Did I win?" Crane said. This was proof that a player can cause his mind to think about process instead of outcome even with the possibility of winning pulling at him. Crane's third career victory earned him \$954,000 sending him on to his best year in goal at that point."

I got tears in my eyes reading that story for the first time and again as I typed that.

In fact, I was so inspired that I had to go share the story with Alexandra immediately after I read it. He only knew he won when his wife ran onto the green. Wow.

PROCESS IS PRIMARY!! More on that in a moment.

First, quick sidenote: As I was sharing that story and my enthusiasm for the book with Alexandra, I also shared a story about how Lanny was a terrible athlete as a kid—not average but the worst of the worst as he describes it. Picked last for pickup basketball or baseball. Then sat on the bench. At school a teacher once asked the class who they thought had the best chance of winning an Olympic gold medal. A kid said, "I don't know who might win, but I know who WON'T win and that's Lanny!" Gah.

One day Lanny was playing right field and a ball was finally hit to him. He thought this might be his chance to claim some glory but instead of catching the ball, it hit him right between the eyes—leaving him in tears while the runners scored and everyone laughed.

Little Lanny went home that day and told his dad he was terrible. His dad, a military officer and war hero, said he disagreed. It was just that Lanny hadn't found what he was good at yet and that he needed to keep looking. Fast forward to Lanny discovering rifle shooting—a sport he enthusiastically embraced with passionate support from his father. He trained and trained and trained. Fast forward another 15 months and he won his first national championship and went on to win Olympic gold. (Everything about that is amazing. As a new dad, I found that story particularly inspiring.)

OK. Back to the main point here.

Imagine you're a golfer. On the 18th hole. You have a 30" putt to win a MILLION dollars. And you're SO (!!!) focused on simply executing the next stroke that you *don't even know you will win if you make it*.

Wow is all I can say to that. PROCESS IS PRIMARY. Most goal setting books focus on the outcome. Some focus on the process. This book breaks it down so brilliantly it's amazing.

Quick check in: Ask yourself if you're spending more time obsessing about the outcome or if you're gonzo on the process—the baby steps and impeccable action you can take to rock it!

Can you make the process a little/a lot more primary?!

IT'S 90% MENTAL

"What's your game? Golf? Sales? Shooting? Singing? Parenting? Managing? Coaching? Teaching? What percentage of what you do is mental? I have asked that question to hundreds of Olympic athletes and PGA Tour pros. They have all answered that their game is at least 90 percent mental.

The top five percent agree that elite performance is 90 percent mental. Then I ask them the second question. What percentage of your time and money do you spend on training the mental game? The answers are always similar: very little or less than ten percent. Now that just doesn't make sense. All say the mental game is 90 percent of their sport but they almost ignore training this vital area."

At this stage, we've all (probably) heard the fact that elite performance is (at least!) 90 percent mental.

"I take control of what I picture, choosing to think about what I want to create in my life."

~ Lanny Bassham

"If I seemed behind, I worked harder. If I seemed ahead, I worked even harder because I knew that the competition would be trying to catch me."

~ Lanny Bassham

Knowing that, how is it possible that we spend so little time actually training our minds?

scratching my head

Hmmmmmm...

For almost all of us, we spend nearly NO time on this domain.

That just makes no sense.

If we want to optimize our lives and actualize our potential, we MUST put proper attention to our mental game.

Lanny has his system. Other great teachers have theirs. Whatever you choose to do, let's just make sure you prioritize the mental side of your life. We all know we need to hit the gym (or track or trail or whatever) to keep our bodies in shape. Let's bring the same awareness to getting our minds right!

WHAT IS MENTAL MANAGEMENT®?

"Mental Management® is the process of improving the probability of having a consistent mental performance, under pressure, on demand."

I wanted a system that would work all the time, in competition, under pressure. This is such a system."

How'd you like to improve the probability of having a consistent mental performance, under pressure, on demand? (Again, whether that's rolling in a 3 foot putt to win a championship or dealing with your screaming toddler before dinner—it's all 90 percent mental!)

Well, that's what Lanny's Mental Management® System is all about.

Lanny articulates the three mental components of his system: the Conscious Mind, the Subconscious Mind and the Self-Image. (Good stuff!!) We want to integrate and optimize each component while keeping them in balance. [Get the book](#) for the thorough breakdown.

For now, we'll take a quick look at a few of my favorite Ideas you can apply to your life NOW!

PRESSURE

"Recognize that pressure is positive and something that you can control."

... pressure is not in your imagination. It is real, a good thing and you can use it to your advantage. You must accept that it is normal to feel something in a pressure situation. This is your body saying, "This is important. Pay attention."

Quick note on pressure. It's real. It's good. You can control it.

The problem arises when we think we're the only ones who feel pressure and then allow ourselves to get overwhelmed by it. All the great people we admire feel pressure. The difference with the peak performers is that they recognize that it's a neutral force and then channel that energy into their performance.

The energy is neutral. It's how we interpret it that creates our experience. If we worry about it and focus on what might go wrong, we feel anxiety. If we smile into it, focus on all the awesomeness we're about to experience, we feel confidence and enthusiasm. The choice is ours. We need to make it and then practice it.

Lanny's #1 way to deal with pressure: "Focus on what you want to see happen, not on what is stressing you."

When we feel wobbly, he tells us we need to take our minds off what is stressing us and put it on

something we can absolutely control. Best way to do that? Focus on your breathing. Take a few deep breaths. Visualize being in complete control of a great performance and then let it rip.

Pro coaching tip from Lanny: Yawn. It's a wacky effective way to reduce stress. Next time you watch the Olympics notice some athletes using this trick. :)

TALK ABOUT YOUR GOOD SHOTS

"I choose to think about, talk about, and write about what I wish to have happen in my life."

~ Lanny Bassham

"In presenting a seminar to Olympic shooters, I was asked, "Mr. Bassham, in the 1978 World Championships, you shot 598/600 to win a medal. What happened on those two nines?"

I answered, "Do you really want to know? Do you want to know how I got nines? That will not help you. You don't want to know how I got two nines. What you should be asking is how I got fifty-eight tens. Besides, I can't remember how I got the nines. I do not reinforce bad shots by remembering them."

You should talk about your good shots. By doing that you improve the probability that you will have more good shots in the future."

I just love that story.

My coach ([Steve Chandler](#)) once reminded me that the best quarterbacks have the shortest memories. They forget their bad plays immediately.

Lanny takes it one step further. Not only does he advocate *never* thinking about, talking about, or writing about your mistakes (the more we do that the more we groove that pattern and make it more likely to experience them again), he focuses on creating imprints of the good stuff by actively recalling past successes and imagining future ones.

Powerful stuff.

How about *you*?

You always focused on your mistakes? From the past and those you're afraid of making in the future? What if you switched that and started inventorying all the amazing things that have gone and will go RIGHT in your performance?

Bring THOSE images/experiences to mind. Groove THOSE into your brain.

Diligently, patiently, persistently.

REHEARSAL + THAT'S LIKE ME

"Determine a goal worth trading your life for."

~ Lanny Bassham

"You can imagine far more than you currently can achieve. If you consistently rehearse what you want to achieve, what you imagine can become reality. Let me give you an example. Back in the 1970s, I was shooting good kneeling scores and began approaching the national record of 396/400. I wanted to set the record at 400, a perfect score. But I had never actually fired a 400, even in training. Nonetheless, I vividly rehearsed shooting the first 100, then another and another. I visualized each of the last ten shots building toward the record. I rehearsed what I knew would happen at that point: I would realize that I was above the record. Next, I rehearsed hearing a voice say, "That's OK. I do this all the time." Then I imagined shooting the final ten easily and saying to myself, "Another 400, that's like me."

I rehearsed this sequence several times a day for two months. In my first competition since beginning the rehearsal, I started with a 100 kneeling. My next two targets were also 100s. I began my last series with ten, ten, ten, ten. Only five more to go. Ten. Ten. Ten. Then reality set in. I was above the record. I heard an internal voice say, "That's OK, I do this all the time." I shot two additional tens, setting the national record at a perfect 400."

Everything about that is awesome. Let's look at two things here: Rehearsal + "That's like me."

"I won the Olympics thousands of times in my mind before entering the competition in Montreal in 1976."

~ Lanny Bassham

#1: Rehearsal. Lanny dedicates a chapter to "Rehearsal" and describes it as "the most versatile mental tool."

I love (!) that story of how he set a perfect record powered by his rehearsal. (Another wow.)

And, get this: Before he won the Olympic gold, Lanny was in the Army. He was stationed somewhere 250 miles away from a shooting range. So, in those 2 years, he was only able to actually shoot for 6 days and those were during competitions—3 days for one national competition and 3 days for another.

So, what did he do? Well, after his family went to bed, he'd spend 2 to 4 hours a night, 5 nights a week, imagining he was shooting.

Guess what? He won both of those national competitions. And then won the World Championships that year as well.

WHAT? That's nuts. Nope. That's the power of our minds.

NOTE: Did Lanny spend all his time rehearsing the *outcome* of his performance (the applause, the fame, the accolades?). OF COURSE NOT. He focused on the PERFORMANCE that would lead to the outcome. Process is primary. So, God bless your vision board and... Let's focus on executing our performance to the best of our abilities.

#2: "That's like me." Let's take a deeper look at the phrases "I do this all the time." + "That's like me."

Remember our 3 components of mental training? The Conscious Mind + The Subconscious Mind + The Self-Image. Well, in short: Our Conscious Mind focuses our thoughts. Our Subconscious Mind is responsible for our physical performance (which is why we just want to trust ourselves and turn off our thinking mind during competition). Our Self-Image ultimately drives our performance.

We can't do more than we think we are.

We need to see ourselves performing at a higher level and affirm that "That's like me." It's like me to do that. Because that's just who I am. Someone who crushes it.

Let's take a closer look at that.

YOUR SELF-IMAGE

"Your Self-Image "makes you act like you." It keeps you within your comfort zone. If you are below your zone, Self-Image makes you uncomfortable and turns up your power until you are within the zone. Likewise, if you are above your zone, the Self-Image will cut your power, dropping you back within your zone. As long as you "act like you," the Self-Image is content and does not interfere. To change your performance, you must change your Self-Image and elevate your comfort zone.

Controlling that change in your Self-Image may be the most important skill you will ever learn. You can change any attitude you do not like. When the Self-Image changes, performance changes."

Self-Image. It's huge.

At the end of the day, we'll pretty much do what we think we're capable of doing. Cue Henry Ford aphorism: "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right."

That's (potentially) bad news and (certainly) good news.

If you're Self-Image is low, your performance is (and has been and will be) low. That's the bad news.

"Be careful not to think about anything that you do not wish to have happen."

~ Lanny Bassham

"Changing a Self-Image that is keeping you from reaching your goals may be the most important skill you will ever learn."

~ Lanny Bassham

The good news: You can change your Self-Image. And, if you're committed to elevating your performance (again, whether that's in parenting or sports or business or coaching or whatever), you must change your Self-Image.

How? Lanny tells us (and dedicates a chapter to explaining): "You change it through imprinting."

Our Self-Image was created over decades of imprints—real experiences and imagined experiences—thoughts, feelings, etc. The good and the bad. Good. Good. Bad. Bad. Bad. Good. Bad. Bad. Bad. Good. Good. All imprints.

As Lanny advises: "Reshaping your mind is much like reshaping your physical body. If you are overweight, it is likely that the cause is repetitive overeating. Repetitive change of your eating habits is the best way to bring your weight down safely. If you have a poor attitude, it is likely that the cause is repetitive negative reinforcement. Repetitive change of your thinking habits is the best way to bring about an attitude change."

If we want to re-wire our Self-Image, we need to quit reinforcing the bad and lean into the good. No longer talking or writing about things you don't want to see in your life, rehearsing and recalling/celebrating the good stuff = powerful ways to rewire. (Lanny has something called "Directive Affirmations" that tie in his goal setting strategies and imprinting in a super cool way. Check out the book for more on that.)

For now: "Remember, your Self-Image is the CURRENT state of YOU. It is not the FINAL state. Be aware that your self-image is evolving in the direction of your imprinting... Nothing is going to change unless *you* change."

Here's to making the process primary as we train our minds, rehearse our optimal lives, forge a new self-image and give our greatest gifts in greatest service to the world!

B

Brian Johnson,
Chief Philosopher

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About the Author of "With Winning in Mind"

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Lanny Bassham is a World Champion and an Olympic Gold Medalist. For over three decades, he has been teaching Mental Management® to Olympians, business owners, Fortune 500 Corporations and the elite of the sport and business communities. Learn more at www.mentalmanagement.com.

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Brian Johnson loves helping people optimize their lives as he studies, embodies and teaches the fundamentals of optimal living—integrating ancient wisdom + modern science + common sense + virtue + mastery + fun. Learn more and optimize your life at brianjohnson.me.