



THE TOP 2 INCHES



"It's not the mountain, we conquer ourselves"

Sir Edmund Hillary

Indoor Bowls is a thinking game. How we think at times can influence how we play. Mentally tough individuals remain calm and relaxed, are competitive in many situations and have lower levels of anxiety. If 10 is the most anxious, where do you lie in a scale of 1-10?

Relaxing + Imagery + Concentration = Better Performance

Some Dos and Don'ts

Do the basics correctly, body position/delivery/follow through

Do use affirmations/mantra/self-talk, keep them short and simple - fun - follow through - control - smooth delivery - relax - flow.

Do always focus on the present - the now, not the past or the future.

Do use visualization - not just the win but visualize playing good shots & playing good shots under pressure.

Do set goals, these should be specific, measurable, difficult but obtainable. Short term and long-term process goals over outcome goals.

Don't be intimidated by the opposition, focus on the bowls, not your opponent.

Don't dwell on the negative, analyse your mistakes, learn from them, then forget them.

Don't beat yourself up after playing a bad bowl and definitely don't let your body language show it. Use positive self talk!

Don't over think things or cloud your mind with too many options, select one and go for it.

Don't be grumpy with your teammates, everyone is trying their best. No one deliberately plays a bad bowl.

Changing a Negative Mind Set

I've got to win this game



Focus on being consistent

Try to avoid thinking about the significance of the game and concentrate on "how to win" rather than winning purpose.

In order to win you have to perform at your optimal level, therefore, concentrate on performing the skill (eg focus on your technique and tactical positioning of each bowl) to the best of your ability. Indeed, if you perform favourably the probability of winning is greater.

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"My run shot isn't working I'll probably miss it"

Have
self belief

Bin it – there is nothing you can do about the previous shot, so focus on the present shot. **I can get this shot as I have the ability**

Indeed, you do not want to bowl anymore bad shots simply because you were focusing on the last bowl. You need to use some positive self statements and a focus cue word to get yourself concentrating on your performance and back into a positive frame of mind – focus on bowling the next bowl and forget how your previous performances have gone.

"I've got to get this shot"

Concentrate on the right technique

Focus on executing the skill – think about your technique and focus on one bowl at a time! You are trying to place the best possible shot, so forget about the significance and importance of the shot, and focus on placing each bowl successfully.

Relax

Confidence

"Don't kill it"

This is easy

Never say the word "don't" if you are using don't you are already in the wrong mind set as you are thinking what not to do eg "killing the jack" You need to change your focus and instead focus on the task in hand.

Games can be won or lost as a result of the headspace you're in, regardless of how you or the opposition are playing.

Playing well can put you in a good mindset, and being in a good mindset can make you play well!

It's natural to have bad games and that's out of our control, but what we can control is our mindset - that's not to say that it's always easy - but what you really need is self-awareness and motivation. Sometimes the motivation could simply be that you want to role model how to handle a bad game in front of new bowlers ♀ Maybe your motivation is to stay upbeat for your team.

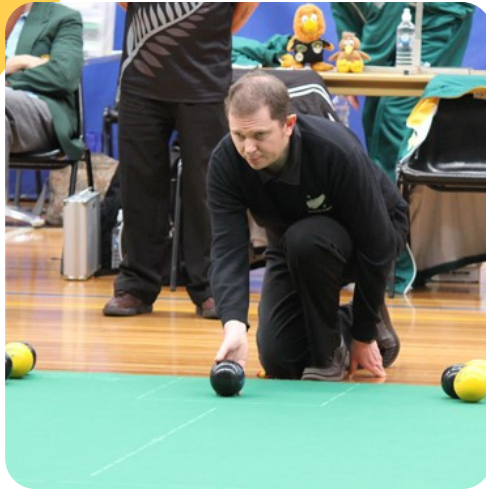
Being self-aware will mean that you notice yourself slipping into a negative mindset, which is the first step to changing it around.

Get yourself into a positive attitude and use positive body language.

Smile at someone! It's the quickest and easiest way to relax.

Clap your opposition's good bowls, even the lucky ones, but whatever happens - don't let the things that are out of your control get to you. Focus on what you can do for yourself. Even if you're not playing well, you can still play smart. You can still hang tough. Regardless - nothing ever good comes from a negative headspace. So if ya have to, "fake it til ya make it" and good things will follow - Teri Blackburn (nee Anderson- NZ MatBlack).





If I'm in a tight situation I like to back myself under pressure more than the other person, doesn't mean I have to be perfect, just better so I have a saying before I bowl that is 'if it's to be it's up to me'. - Grant Raynor (NZ Mat Black)

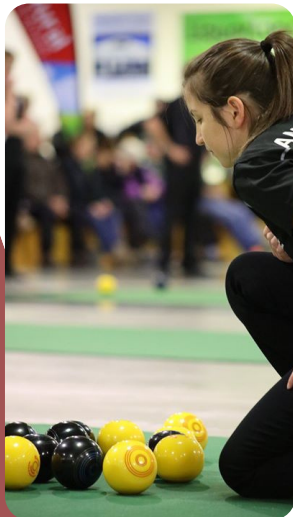
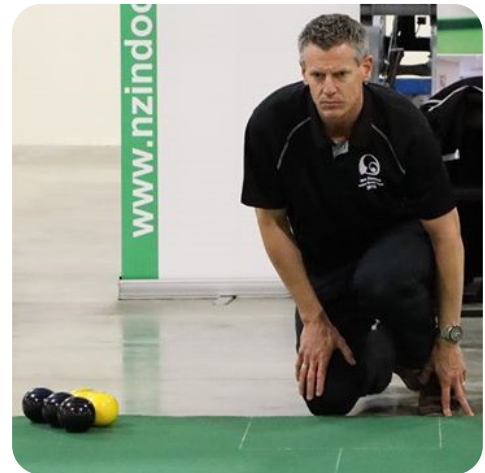
Positive affirmation.

Mentally picture the shot/result.

Try to hold your reactions to a bad bowl. Stay in the blue (calm), don't cross over to the red (frustrated). Keep a clear head to make the next shot decision. Don't rush in like red rag to a bull.

You can't change your last bowl, but you can learn from it.

- Grant L'Ami (NZ Mat Black)



Oh! and a wee simple one - the best way to combat pressure is to enjoy the game.

A few years ago I started feeling the pressure of situations, and I remember one game in particular - I'd reached the last 8 of the National singles and I simply didn't want to be there! (Needless to say I lost lol).

I reminded myself that as a junior, my goal was to make those representative teams and go deep into tournaments etc, and when I first started achieving those goals I loved every minute!!

But there I was, not enjoying this last 8 game all because I didn't want to be in a pressure situation. From then on I have reminded myself that I love Indoor Bowls, I do want to be there and playing the big stuff, and now I don't feel the pressure in a negative way anymore - Teri Blackburn (nee Anderson- NZ Mat Black)

Relaxation Tips

Laugh or smile when you feel tension coming on

- Have fun – enjoy the situation
- Practice in stressful situations
- Slow down – take your time
- Stay focused in the present



Be nice to players, officials & umpires Without them there would be no game!

“One of the biggest differences between top players and the good players is when they are under the gun, they see & hear fewer distractions than anyone else”

Helen Alfredson- LPGA Tour

Helpful website/books

www.peaksports.com

Hodge KP 1994 – Sports Motivation

Orlick T - In Pursuit of Excellence

Dr Ceri Evans – Perform Under Pressure



With the records and all the competition over the years what I've learnt is that the power of the mind is incredible. The guy with the strongest mind will win at the top level...it's all in the top two inches.

There are guys out there as strong as me– stronger.(But) you have to be smart, you have to relax and you have to enjoy yourself.

Quote from David Fagan – (Sheep Shearer)

Four-time world champion

&

11 time NZ Champion