



PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

For the last twenty-five years I have had the pleasure to work with a number of elite athletes and during this period I have also taught and played with high level politicians, business leaders, TV stars, sports stars and a number of entrepreneurs. I have often thought that what works for elite athletes can work for business and what works for business can be adapted for any high competition sport.

Goal setting, S.W.O.T analysis and strategic planning are just a few of the everyday business disciplines that are now common place in the office environment and yet they have been used for years by athletes to help them to break personal records. If this is the case then I believe that there are other areas that we can find in athletic endeavours that could be used to help all of us perform better in our chosen activity.

Picture the following scene in your mind, you are just about to enter the boardroom of a company with which you want to close a deal, or if you prefer you could be entering an office for a job interview or how about remembering when you were preparing to go into your final examinations. In each case it is normal to feel a little apprehensive or even nervous before.

How often have you heard someone tell to, “just relax”?

Likewise how many times have you heard someone suggest that all you have to do is, “concentrate on this one”?

Both of these two sayings are very common and yet have you ever been shown or told how to relax or for that matter concentrate?

You see we use these terms so often that we and others take it for granted that everybody knows what is meant. Just take a moment and think about how you relax. Some may have thought about being on a beach watching the sea, others about their favourite chair and others about a special place or activity.



Now think about how you concentrate. Again there will be lots of different answers but I am sure that the words focus and attention came into your mind at some point.

In sport there are lots of times when you need to relax, how about when the pressure is on, prior to the starting pistol in athletics, before a free throw in basketball or a must make putt on the last hole to win in golf. There are also times when you must concentrate and make good decisions, after you hit a bad shot, when finding your ball in a difficult position or deciding on the tactics for the last play in a team game?

There are only three places that your mind can be, the PAST- the PRESENT- the FUTURE and there is only one place that is good for golf and that is the present. The problem is when people say “stay in the present”, its just words like just relax, until they teach you how to they are just words.

To last Monday ← PAST / PRESENT / FUTURE → to next Friday

Answer these two questions:

1. Can your mind go back and forward in time?
2. Can your body go back and forward in time?

So therefore your gateway to the present is through your body so by concentrating on your breathing you will easily be able to get back into the present moment. In Eastern cultures Meditation is used as a method of keeping in the present. The use of breathing techniques will help you to not only stay in the present but also be able to feel a deep sense of relaxation.

Breathing technique:

There are many different breathing techniques but you can try one by placing your hand on your belly and then breathing in through the nose, as you inhale allow the belly to expand, then as you breath out allow your belly to deflate, repeat and with every repetition allow your breathing to become more and more rhythmical, if you wish you can allow your eyes to close but it is not necessary. Ten breaths is normally enough to re-focus your mind and to feel relaxed even when under severe pressure.

Article written by Tony Bennett

Tel (351) 93 2524253

Email tony@bmycoach.org