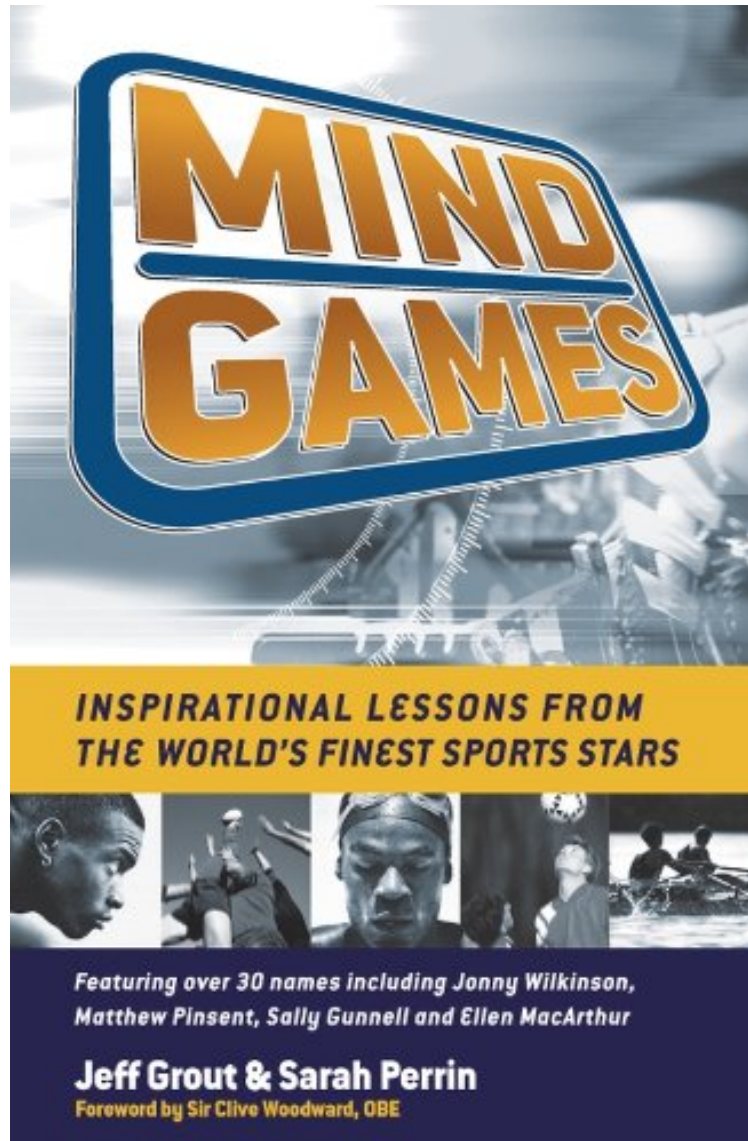


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Mind Games: Inspirational Lessons from the World's Finest Sports Stars

Jeff Grout, Sarah Perrin

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Jeff Grout, Sarah Perrin : Mind Games: Inspirational Lessons from the World's Finest Sports Stars before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mind Games: Inspirational Lessons from the World's Finest Sports Stars:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Some simple principles that seem intuitiveBy Neil van der Meer
Worth reading - Two thoughts:
1. Top - Easy to understand: Plenty of examples from many different sports and coaches.
2. Tip - Widen the scope: A new edition might include some broader learnings or examples from top

American or Russian athletes. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good organisation and incisive! By Jack Tan

First I compliment Jeff Grout and Sarah Perrin for the excellent organisation of this book. The book is divided into 5 main sections: Personality Power, Motivational Matters, Mental Training, Peak Performance and Team Spirit. At the end of each main section, Jeff and Sarah provide a summary of the section and how these lessons could be used in business context or even in one's own life. I especially like the following excerpts:

1. The most important characteristics of mental toughness: " Having an unshakable self-belief in your ability to achieve your competition goals."
2. There are common ingredients that world champions exhibit, and the first one is the 'never say die' approach - the ability to work and persist in what they are doing, no matter what. They want to achieve something (their dream), and because they need to achieve it. No one can give someone else self belief in themselves, it has to be generated by each individual for themselves.
3. Effective training builds up confidence, which leads to belief.
4. Top sportsmen build up their belief by knowing they are the fittest, strongest, the sharpest - whatever it takes.
5. If you limit your beliefs, you limit your potential to achieve.
6. When it comes to the critical situation or key moments in games, what people choose to say to themselves really matters. That's what makes the difference between success or failure, winning or losing.
7. Your successes in life are what people see, but it's your failures and disappointments that shape you, and how you deal with those.
8. The world's best performers talk about pain, but they talk about loving it. They know the pain is going to happen and when it does, it's fantastic. They think: "This is what I live for, for this is what I train for, and it's great it's here and I'm going to beat it."
9. A champion's positive outlook also demonstrates itself in the form of courage - having the courage to fail.
10. Lots of people don't get married because of the potential of failures. Lots of people carry lots of insecurities. It holds them back in their lives.
11. There are four fears: the fear of losing, fear of making a mistake, fear of rejection and fear of embarrassment. Worrying about making mistakes means you don't take risks, and that means no progress. Champions have to want to live on the edge; they have got to be comfortable being there.
12. Repeated winners also have a strong "killer instinct". They won't feel sympathy for the opponent they are about to defeat. The same goes in other areas of life too. If you don't mind whether you are an accounts clerk or a financial director, then you are more likely to remain as a clerk, because becoming a finance director requires years of training, hard work and pressure.
13. Self-belief is likely to have stronger foundations if confidence is gained in tandem with competence. It is vulnerable unless those skills have been tested in situations of increasing pressure.
14. If you think you can do something but never initiate an action plan of how to develop the necessary skills, you will never be able to function optimally at the highest level.
15. By focusing on processes rather than our emotions, we can learn to create positive outcomes from the situations and experiences we encounter.
16. It is usually more effective to encourage people to focus attention on the processes that lead to their desired outcomes, rather than the outcomes themselves.
17. The fourth most important characteristics of mental toughness was: "Having the desire and internalised motive to succeed."
18. The need to win, and the thrill that comes from achieving goals, is clearly a powerful motivator for many top sportspeople.
19. Without goals, no one fulfills a dream to be the best.
20. Goals also need to be fired with passion, linked to the individual's emotion to inspire them. Goals provide direction, while desire gives energy and passion.
21. There are three types of goals: outcome goals, performance goals and process goals. The outcome goals keep the athlete motivated and give them a sense of direction, but they have to focus on performance goals.
22. There is a fine line between having goals which are absolutely fantastic, and goals that are too ambitious and are therefore bad goals.
23. Tests must be truly challenging. Otherwise, why bother with them?
24. If you don't beat someone this time, beat them next time. If it doesn't happen that time, beat them the time after that. You seek out people who are even better than you and you keep going at them. It's your drive, your sense of purpose, your relentless determination to keep going for your goal.
25. The emotional response that comes from winning - or not losing - is absolutely key to the motivation of successful people.
26. There must be alignment between an individual's goals and values.
27. Recalling the feel of the action is vital. You have to be aware of the scene, who is there, the colours, the sounds, any movement and the atmosphere.
28. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) involves goal setting, visualisation and managing your state. The person is seeing the experience through his own eyes, rather than watching themselves having the experience.
29. Getting the best out of training requires players to try to recreate mentally the conditions they would face in a real game.
30. It is clear thinking that drives effective action; ineffective thinking leads to ineffective action. Anybody can think clearly in moments when they are under control, but it's thinking clearly under pressure that is difficult.
31. Learning something in the classroom is more a "word lesson" and not as powerful as learning experience.
32. It's the people who forget the process and try to do things differently who get in a mess.
33. Athletes keep journals where they record their performances and their feelings at the time and learn from that.
34. Winning is about being better today than you were yesterday.
35. It is important to know why you have won as it is to know why you haven't. If you don't know why you won, it was an accident.
36. Belief has to start with the athlete, but is then reinforced by the coach.
37. Successful coaching relationship requires respect, trust, and the opportunity for each of the people involved to discover things they didn't know.
38. Learn to live with no second chances.
39. You start off with your values. You've also got to agree your vision.
40. Visualisation alone is limited without talent and skills. Things are not going to happen if you haven't got the necessary skill base, the skill acquisition framework, the confidence derived from gradually acquiring competence.
41. Champions need to be able to

think correctly under pressure. They see pressure as exciting and stimulating rather than threatening.⁴² Seize opportunities to practice your skills.⁴³ If you focus on what you have done right, you are more likely to be able to reproduce that winning performance again in the future. What was it about your performance that pleases you? Why did this go well? How can you try to ensure you do this similarly in future? What aspects do you think you could have handled better? How could you try to improve these in future? Are there extra skills you can develop or existing ones you can improve?⁴⁴ If you feel that your coach is no longer helping you, don't be afraid to end the relationship. It's up to you to achieve your goals; no one else can do that for you.⁴⁵ Knowing you've got control over things is so important.⁴⁶ Self esteem is an important factor to maintain positive outlook. World champions have complete control of how they feel about themselves and they don't take things personally. They take negative feedback as a way to improve.⁴⁷ When champions are "in the zone", they can't remember what they actually did because they are flowing and not processing.⁴⁸ Always stay involved mentally with what you are doing. Concentrate on the process of that particular sport rather than the outcome.⁴⁹ Controlling attention under pressure is the most important key to success.⁵⁰ You need to get in the habit of asking yourself things like, "How am I running? What am I doing now?" That way you'll automatically improve. The key thing is staying in the "now". You have to be aware of when you're focusing on the wrong thing.⁵¹ If you have routine, make sure it meets the repeatability and controllability criteria.⁵² It is what you are doing that counts.⁵³ When we are under pressure we start to identify with past or future events as if they were happening in the present moment. This distorts our perception and filters the way we respond to events. Clear thinking becomes lost as we revert to familiar patterns of behaviour - what we are comfortable with.⁵⁴ The most important thing is to continue to focus purely on effective process.⁵⁵ Once basic mechanics are firmly established, focus on the feel of the swing.⁵⁶ Practice is important when working to develop good focus.⁵⁷ Focus on what is most important now, make that the focus of your attention.⁵⁸ Practise observing events without becoming emotionally involved.⁵⁹ If you want to improve your concentration, play games that can help to train your mind appropriately.⁶⁰ When selecting a team, start with a desired pattern of playing and select the players who would be able to make that pattern work. You should not choose people for the team because they had talent.⁶¹ Encourage team members to police themselves. Empower the team to determine what happens if someone contravenes the charter.⁶² In addition to team values, strong team requires a culture where it is OK to make mistakes.⁶³ Giving descriptive feedback to each other about what they see happening, what they see each other doing, what they see happening as a result, and how they feel. It's not what they think, but how they feel - expressed in word - that counts.⁶⁴ Delivering a clear-headed, incisive and simple briefing can help to put players back on track to victory.⁶⁵ Shouting at teams and individuals will not usually generate improved performance.

Excerpts from some of the world champions:

I. Dr. Stephanie Cook, who took the gold medal in the modern pentathlon in the 2000 Sydney Olympics: "You're absolutely shattered. I did that because I love it, because I got more out of my life, and I got more out of my job by doing that - but so many people thought that I was completely crazy." "You have to train mentally to be able to do whatever has happened aside and focus purely on what you're doing. You have to focus on the process, not the result." "She runs according to her own plan, and not let herself get distracted by other runners.

II. Gill Clark, former badminton champion: "She doesn't think it appropriate for people to talk about having to make 'sacrifices'. What top performers do is make choices."

III. Nick Faldo, golf champion: "When told that only one in two thousand or ten thousand makes it to be a top golfer, 'Fine. I'm the one.'"

IV. Lawrence Dallaglio, England rugby captain: "I'm going to focus and concentrate on doing certain things well, that I know I'm going to do well." That helps to overcome his injury aspect.

V. Johnny Wilkinson, England rugby fly-half: "You need a balance of setting high standards and trying to achieve them, and then also being able to pat yourself on the back when there was a real need to get it perfect and you got it right." "To think to myself that this is fun and it's what I want to do."

VI. Ellen MacArthur, round-the-world yachtswoman: "Every race you do pushes you to your limits and that's how you learn." "Life's about pushing yourself further and learning and that's what I intend to do."

VII. Roger Black, Champion in 400m run: "The great pain to me in life is to look back and know that I didn't do something properly - whatever it is. For me it's about being able to say I did as well as I wanted to do, or as well as I could." "The magic was to get the performance right; the result would usually follow."

VIII. Sir Chay Blyth: "With any project I take a blank sheet of paper and I write down the aim of the exercise - the goal - and take it from there. It's very fulfilling when you've written down an aim, planned everything and then you bring it to a successful conclusion. It's tremendous. I use the same process for business that I used for my sailing adventures. I set down the goals, I set down all the relevant factors involved and carry on from there."

VIV. Sally Gunnell, Olympic hurdle gold medallist: "You need realistic goals that are achievable." "There is nothing you can do about anybody else, so why even worry about it? It's important to accept you can only make a difference to yourself." "You literally had to visualise it a year beforehand." "As long as you believe that you're doing the right thing, you're halfway there." "I've warmed up, I've done everything I can do. There's nothing else that could get me prepared. I'm in total control." - when everyone else was charging around during 1992 Olympic 400m hurdles. "I visualise myself standing on the stage, delivering the perfect speech and people enjoying what I was saying" - after her athletics career is over.

X. Steve Backley, Javelin Champion: "I want to win. That's what I set my life up to do." "If you have a plan, belief and want it enough, it's going to happen."

XI. Adrain Moorhouse, swimmer: "Going for something big and then working out what

you can do in reality. Be hard on yourself but know how to deal with failure. Don't be a dreamer, be a planner."XII. David Platt, England team "You have to set yourself a goal that is achievable. It has to be in touching distance. Once you got it, nothing says you can't set yourself another goal."XIII. Michael Lynagh, Australian fly-half: "Focus on the outcome often causes failure. Focus on the task at hand and the outcome will look after itself."XIV. Sven-Goran-Eriksson, England's World Cup coach "Coaches need to create supportive environments that encourages footballers to try new things, without worrying about the repercussions of making mistakes." "I always keep a certain distance from my players."XV. Matthew Pinsent, Olympic rower: "Don't chase the race. You have to row your own race to a certain extent."XVI. Michael Lynagh, captain of Australia: "As captain you do have to make an effort to be heard and have points of view and talk to people." "Part of captaincy is delegating to people who are in a position, and that is what I did. I got people within the team who were experienced as my deputies."XVII. David Coulthard, McLaren driver: "You have to make sure that everyone understands they have a role to play, and that they make a difference."XVIII. Jack Charlton, coach of Middleboroughs "It is better to give players one simple instruction, rather than a choice of options." 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing Sports Wisdom By Vance After a fast start, the book fails to deliver the promised tidbits of sports wisdom and inspiration. As an American, it concentrates far too much on British sports and individual sports to hold the interest of kids who compete on US team sports such as hockey and baseball. Wholly unsatisfying.

What makes a winner - in business or in sport? Why do some people consistently break sales targets, cross the line first or hammer the ball in the net with pinpoint accuracy? Natural talent and disciplined training are vital. But with two equally matched professionals, something else makes the difference that provides that extra, champion factor: the mind. Mind Games looks into the mental processes of sporting stars, identifying the attitudes and approaches that enable them to achieve peak performance, every time, and applies them specifically to the world of business. What are the key mental characteristics that make some people come out on top? How do winners channel adrenaline into controlled power while losers choke? What do sportsmen and women mean when they talk about 'the inner game', being 'in the zone' or being 'in the now'? What is it that coaches do to realise the potential they see? What are the lessons that business winners need to learn from sport's superstars? Mind Games has the full involvement of over 30 sporting household names, including Sven-Goran Eriksson, Matthew Pinsent, Clive Woodward, Nick Faldo, Jonny Wilkinson. The authors draw on extensive first-hand experiences of acknowledged sporting champions across a range of sports, identifying personal techniques proven to have worked under the pressure of top-level competition. They also draw on the expertise of professional coaches and psychologists who have worked with sportsmen and women.

"...offers answers from sporting leaders to help us mere mortals make a go of things in all walks..." (Lads Mag) "fresh insights" (Director, September 04) "reinforces the power of the mind and leaves you in no doubt that sports psychology is worth looking into further." (British Runner, October 2004) "...identifies the attitudes and approaches that enable sporting stars to reach their peak, and applies them to the corporate world" (Human Resources, October 04) "will delight sports fans and those who get turned on by all that locker-room talk of 'pressure' and 'performance'" (Accounting and Business, October 2004) "both writers have lots of experience of these mental disciplines and the sporting contributions are all household names." (City to Cities, November/ December 2004) "From the Inside Flap What makes a winner? Why do some people consistently hammer the ball in the net with pinpoint accuracy, break their targets at work or achieve ambitious goals? There is one factor that lies behind everything: the mind. Mind Games looks into the mental processes of sports stars, identifying the attitudes and approaches that enable them to achieve peak performance, every time. It reveals the mental characteristics that make some people come out on top. It shows how winners channel adrenaline into controlled power while losers choke. It explains what sportsmen and women mean when they talk about 'the inner game' and being 'in the zone'. And it shows how you can use these techniques in your own life to get to where you want to be. Jeff Grout and Sarah Perrin draw on extensive first-hand experiences, identifying personal techniques used by coaches and athletes proven to have worked under the pressure of top-level competition. Get into the minds of these major names: Sir Clive Woodward OBE, England rugby coach Sven-Goran Eriksson, England football coach Matthew Pinsent, rower, three times Olympic gold medallist Jonny Wilkinson, England rugby fly-half, arguably the world's best kicker Sally Gunnell, former Olympic, World, Commonwealth and European 400m hurdles champion Ellen MacArthur, fastest woman to sail around the world single-handed Roger Black, 4 x 400m World Champion and Olympic silver medallist Nick Faldo, Britain's most successful golfer Dr Stephanie Cook, Olympic and World modern pentathlon champion and many more. From the Back Cover Life is a mind game. All your aspirations are played out in your head. All your relationships are shaped in your head. Even your career progression depends on your mental approach to the world. Your mind dictates whether you fulfil your potential or live your life dreaming. In sport it can make the difference between winning and losing. Mind Games reveals the techniques the world's biggest sports stars use to cross the

line first, score the most points and outwit their opponents. Jeff Grout and Sarah Perrin draw on extensive first-hand experiences, identifying personal techniques used by coaches and athletes proven to have worked under the pressure of top-level competition. Get into the minds of sporting champions such as Matthew Pinsent, Ellen MacArthur, Nick Faldo, Sir Clive Woodward, Sally Gunnell, Jonny Wilkinson and Roger Black. The lessons of these sporting heroes are applicable in any area of life, whether you want to be a better parent, achieve more at work or fulfil a lifelong ambition. The mind can be a great ally or a great obstacle. Mind Games shows how the sporting greats have harnessed its potential. Apply their lessons and yoursquo;ll find a world of possibility opening up to you. Life is a mind game. Success is in the head.