



# PERFORM LIKE A CHAMPION

## Within the Zone of Competition

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*Teams making the playoffs have proven they have the talent to succeed. Now is the time when Mental Toughness will determine who wins under pressure. Ultimately, championships are won by the team that is:*

### **ENERGIZED, FOCUSED, and CONFIDENT**

These three performance boosting agents are best developed within the **Zone of Competition**. This is an imaginary time capsule that begins the moment your team first qualifies for the championship and ends at the final moment of the game. Within the **Zone of Competition** all negativity is blocked out and every thought, feeling, and action is equally important in contributing to a championship performance. There is no distraction concerning the outcome, only the experience of Present – Positive – Process:

Energize – Let every feeling you are having energize you by interpreting them as a signal that your body's activation mechanism is switching on by saying, "This is my body getting ready to compete and meet the CHALLENGE of this event".

Focused – Having a plan for your mental game is helpful in two ways. First, it prevents you from negative and "what if" thinking, and most importantly reminds you of what you have been focusing on when you are performing well. Create a Mental Plan that directs your focus of attention across three phases of the competition: Pre-Competition Warm-up, Event Focus, and a Re-Focusing Plan. An effective precompetitive warm-up combines positive self-talk with reminders of what you have done WELL recently in practice and in competition. This is usually referred to as going to the WELL.

Your Event Focus Plan consists of recalling your mental focus when you were playing at your best and imagining yourself having this same focus during important times in the upcoming game. Your Re-Focusing Plan consists of a word or phrase that you have associated with strength/determination/mental toughness during your training. Imagine using this Re-Focusing word or phrase to get you back to your Focus Plan during times in the game when there is a distraction or a set-back.

Confident – Building confidence requires combining your POSITIVE ENERGY with your MENTAL PLAN to create a strong belief in yourself and your ability to succeed. The more you focus on what is within your control; your thoughts, your feelings, and the execution of your exceptional physical skills, the more confident you will become. Going to the WELL and reminding yourself of your ability to succeed in difficult situations significantly adds to your levels of self-confidence. Remember: What the Mind can Conceive, and the Heart can Believe, you can Achieve.

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Perform at your BEST when it matters MOST