



Owning the Zone

A golf training guide by Bill Hamilton



**The science of focus and concentration
in golf competition.**

The Champion's Brain

Owning the Zone

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"The *Champion's Brain* is an attitude. It is all about being in the proper frame of mind when it is your time to hit a golf shot. What Bill describes will enable you to become consistent in your thinking and therefore lead to better golf shots and lower scores"

David Passerell

Virginia State Amateur Champion

Director: The First Tee of Charlottesville Foundation.

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Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

I need to match
that shot.

What happens if
I miss the shot?

This guy plays
so darn slow!

I've got this.
I am going to win.



10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Good line, Good balance, Good contact.



Introduction:

There are many books and opinions about the mental aspects of playing golf. They teach a range of things from being positive, picturing the shot to thinking about nothing. It all comes down to your focus at the moment of your shot. How do you do it? What precisely is happening in your mind at that critical time? After years of training, drills and successful competition I am going to show you in detail how to build for yourself the *Champion's Brain*.

Golf is unlike any other sport when it comes to focus and

mental preparation. In basketball and football pre-game your energy is up, adrenaline running and emotions can be sky high. In golf you have to be in confident control of your mind and emotions. You can't consistently ride them.

One of the pros I know came to me out of the blue and said, "I need you to fix my brain." He and I have played many rounds of golf together. I knew he was having focus, planning and certainty issues. I was actually honored to help him. The high school team I coach had just won the state championship and I had recently won my sixth amateur championship in the past few years. I knew that those successes were from being mentally complete and prepared. I was sure I could help. Off we went. He let me take control with what I am about to show you. Within three holes he was surprised how the noise he normally battled during a round of golf was turning off. Weeks later he was advancing in a match play tournament now excited about recognizing and defeating the mental assaults that had controlled him.

A young thirteen year old golfer was working diligently at his game. It was clear after a short talk with him he

really wanted to improve. More than that, he wanted to be great. He had the fire. For a few days we worked on putting, chipping and basic set up changes. We also talked through ways to set your mental stability for the shot. I was quite surprised when a few days later this young man passed me while I was practicing putting. With a huge smile of excitement, he said "I just shot my lowest score ever on the front". He added that he used my mental guidelines for his setup and told me about them in detail. Like I said, this kid had the fire. He did the work.

Dedicated golfers practice shots, play many practice rounds, take lessons, have personal strategies and carefully select their gear. The better you play, the clearer it is that you have one final obstacle. To consistently play great rounds you must have mental consistency and focus.

When you watch pro tournaments one of the most repeated challenges particularly on the finishing holes is the player's ability to block out distracting thoughts and emotions.

The 2012 PGA Tour is a prime demonstration. Big leads have been blown. There have been huge comebacks by someone riding a wave of momentum.

Tiger Woods is back on the prowl. Why? Although it is a given that Tiger is an amazing athlete, he always said his greatest asset is his mental toughness. Keeping in mind his serious physical injuries, his mind and emotions have also taken massive and direct hits. He is finding a new definition of focus. The extent of his next wave of success, given no more serious injuries, is solely dependent on his ability to focus and finish. The talent is there.

I have created the *Champion's Brain* as a tool for anyone to use to own mental consistency and focus at the time of your shot in any situation. It is more important than using the right ball or clubs for your swing. The tool is very simple. Understanding why you use it is the key to your success. I can't emphasize this enough. You must understand the details of what is really happening between your mind, emotions and body to be able to successfully use the *Champion's Brain*. If you use the *Champion's Brain* you will get the most out of your

hours of practice and lessons. You will begin to see what is really going on in your mind during a round of golf. You will clearly see what you are doing right, but will also clearly see the mental and emotional challenges that were literally blocking the way to higher levels of success in golf. With the *Champion's Brain* you will be a better golfer and have more fun with a sharper focus than you ever thought possible.

If you practice the steps in this book you will have the ability to do the following.

1. Identify the thoughts that are your enemy.
2. Identify distracting emotional ups and downs and their sources that are also your enemy.
3. Mentally pre-define your golfing situation to keep the variety of personalities of playing partners from joining enemies one and two.
4. Create your mental and emotional environment rather than having them create you.
5. Have a training system that will make the focus you see in champions a permanent piece of who **you** are.

6. Consistently play the best golf you have ever played.

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Chapter 1

Championship Day:

In the spring of 2011 I had the honor and pleasure of coaching the Virginia State High School Golf Champions. We had overcome some early season issues and went from being unranked to winning the district championship by eleven strokes and the state championship by fifteen. Early in the season I noticed we had lost the sharper focus that had been part of a winning momentum. Without going into too much detail we worked hard on choosing proper margins of error, better course management and finally what has

become the *Champion's Brain*. It became a spring to remember. The season was from a movie script. The challenges, disappointments, hard work, courage, friendships, fun, and championships have become legendary. It was a season for the ages.

Fast forward a few months. I remember what a beautiful day it was. I was happy to be alive let alone playing golf and leading a golf tournament. It was Sunday of the 2011 Reines Jewelers Charlottesville City Senior Championship. My good friend and constant playing partner, was having a great day. I heard that he was at least two under for the day. He was in the second to last group. I was several shots clear of the three with me in the last group. Of all the people to catch me I was ok if it was him, but I still wanted to win the tournament.

I came up to number twelve, an uphill 500 yard par 5. I hit a really nice tee shot just a foot into the right rough 220 out. I was walking up to the ball with two clubs, a four hybrid and a five wood. A wise man makes his way sure. Right out of the Bible. I looked down at the ball. It was a perfect lie. The four hybrid would be a safe lay-

up. The five wood to go for the flag on a fairly small bunkered green. I thought, here is where you win this tournament. Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one. Good line, good balance, good contact. Hit the shot. Put the five wood on the green. I made the twenty foot eagle putt.

The head pro, another good friend of mine, was cheering from the hill on the way to the thirteenth tee box. Oddly, I had no emotional reaction. I was thinking about the next shot.

Thirteen is an uphill par three. Flag tight right and a little blind just left of more bunkers. Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one. Good line, good balance, good contact. Hit the shot. It lands just right of the flag. Two skips and we hear the ball hit the flag near the bottom at the cup. We couldn't see it go in. To their credit and good sportsmanship the other three with me in the championship group were cheering. They were yelling for the pro to go check the hole. They hadn't even taken their shots yet. I was trying to tell them I'm just hoping it is close. We'll see when we get to the green. No. They waited while the pro walked over to

the hole. This I will never forget. He did a double fist pump looking down the flag to the ball in the cup. Cheers, high fives and handshakes. Okay. Five more holes to play.

I was four under in two holes. The battle had intensified. The new and heavy challenger was my own brain and emotions while I was teeing up to one of the hardest driving holes on the golf course. Fourteen is an uphill hard dogleg left. You have bunkers and woods if you pull it and tall cedars if you push it. I normally hit pretty straight off the tee but on this hole I chose a target line a little to a margin of error for a pull. Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one. Good line, good balance, good contact. Hit the shot. Straight down the target line.

I played even par the last five holes. One more birdie, one more bogie to win by five strokes. This was my sixth amateur golf championship. No question about this one. I won the mental battle. I soundly defeated the biggest enemy to winning. Me.

Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

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Chapter 2

Golf in three pieces:

Golf has three main pieces. It is a combination of baseball, playing a violin and saying lines in a play on stage or giving a speech. I will explain.

Part of the joy of playing baseball or softball is swinging hard, making good contact and basically knocking the heck out of the ball. That is one of the initial attractions of golf to the beginner. After a few swings that make solid contact the enthusiasm grows and a hunger to do it again is born. The refinement of direction, controlled

distance and shot making can wait. Early on you don't even know what that is. It is just very cool to knock the heck out of the ball.

Shortly after the baseball phase it becomes clear that killer drives and hitting a pitching wedge 150 yards doesn't necessarily equate to lower scores. Can I repeat distances and control direction? You are entering the violin zone. Now you are ninety yards and in. You are entering violin heaven. Touch, feel, angle of attack and technique all become magnified as you discover a shrinking margin of error for the correct shot.

So let's say you get a good swing coach. You fix the baseball side of your game. You have settled down your drives. You've traded a little distance for a lot more accuracy. You have smoothed your irons and become more directional and distance dependable. Let's say you have put the time in. You have chipped and putted until you have a reasonable short game. You can now at least either two putt or get an up and in chip to work in most cases. Like the accuracy needed to play the violin properly, this part of the game takes a large amount of

practice, patience and repetition to master. This is all very good progress.

So you are saying I get these baseball and violin analogies, but how is golf like saying lines in a play or giving a speech? Because all of a sudden - bam! You walk out onto the first tee. You are now on stage. You are alone. All eyes are on you.

Ever heard, “gee whiz, I was hitting the ball perfectly on the driving range before the round and then played poorly”? This is what happens. No question. It is mental. The pressure of playing arrives.

I have a friend who is one of the best golfers in the region yet he won't play in any of the local singles golf championships because he can't overcome his fear of failing publicly. Period. He doesn't want his name in the paper next to a big number. Imagine you get up on the first tee. Twenty or more people are watching you. A hundred co-workers or friends will be checking scores in the paper or on-line in the morning. Yikes! This is only part of the mental assault you are under. Your first time can be like trying to hold back a slow moving train. You

professionals have the added pressure of making a living, making the cut, sponsors expectations, keeping your card, crowd noise and just flat out wanting to win.

This should now make sense to you. Like I said, you are an actor on stage or you have to give a speech. You have rehearsed your lines (the shots). The thing every golf shot needs is simple. You are out on the course doing what you have practiced thousands of times. You are choosing the distance (the right club), the line and then hitting the shot. It is like saying your lines. Every shot has a length and a directional line. It is very specific. Once you have made those two decisions you have begun the *Champion's Brain*. You are hitting the shot, one you have practiced hundreds of times around a practice green, the driving range or a non-tournament round with friends. All you are doing is saying your lines. Lines you have practiced and memorized. The forces that generate the nerves, dry mouth and fear as you take the stage to say your lines or give the speech are the same forces which I will show you how to defeat when in golf competition.

Now the real fun begins. As you climb the ladder of golf success you have got to defeat the increasing noise that comes with it. Like I said before, this book is for those who are working hard at their games, both amateurs and pros. If you are, you know what I am talking about. When your scores are dropping, low 80's, upper 70's, low 70's and then the 60's the battle becomes more intense.

I will show you how to win the battle against a new biggest enemy you may not have known was waiting to challenge you.

Yes. It is you.

You will develop and recognize clarity and focus. You will be amazed when it works.

Keep going.

Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

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that shot.

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Good line, Good balance, Good contact.



Chapter 3

What is the *Champion's Brain*?

What is the *Champion's Brain*? It is clarity of focus in athletic performance.

It is so simple and yet so difficult. I will take you there. I am telling you this with the certainty of importance as if I was telling you how to save a life.

Here is the proof of how what is in this guide will effectively help you train yourself and develop the *Champion's Brain*.

Answer these questions:

Have you ever heard a song and while it is playing you visualize the circumstances, like high school or Christmas, when you used to listen to that song repeatedly? I call this an **associative connection**.

Ever smell food that makes you hungry while at the same time generates memories of the place where you ate the food? This is another associative connection. Your memory of that moment connected by the song or the smell is then triggering an emotional response.

I will show you how to turn that cause and effect into a controlled mental zone that you will produce. It is the *Champion's Brain*. The associative connection I will help you create will be your calm in the midst of pressures, distractions and frustrations. With the *Champion's Brain*, the biggest thing you will notice is that the pressures, distractions and frustrations that used to negatively impact your game are gone. No, really. Gone.

One pro I was working with was practicing what I will be showing you. He actually made this comment, "This is

amazing. My brain has stopped! I can focus!"
Yeah, I know what you are thinking. I assure you this
isn't too good to be true. I will show you how to do it.

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Chapter 4

First Layer - Physical Drilling:

First Layer: Physical drilling. Make and schedule goals.

There are many great sayings:

The harder I work the luckier I get is from the original -
I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work
the more I have of it.

Thomas Jefferson

A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes
sweat, determination and hard work.

Colin Powell

All the so-called "secrets of success" will not work unless you do.
Unknown.

The key to the *Champion's Brain* is eliminating the mental and emotional clutter at the time of your shot giving you the best opportunity to execute the shot to perfection. It is the difference between knowing what is behind a fog blanketed view and having the fog removed. The *Champion's Brain* will remove the fog.

The presumption in this guide is that you are a worker, a dreamer and will be diligent. Since you are reading this guide, this is you. You want to play your best golf every round.

Since you are a worker, a dreamer and diligent - excellent. Let us proceed.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

You will see these words and numbers many times in this training. They will become your comfort. Like a good friend, a cup of coffee, your favorite food. I will show you how to "associatively connect" these numbers and words to your focus during your practice time. They will become the helmet that shields your field of focus

as you are shooting lower scores with clearer thinking than you ever thought possible.

Give this training ten diligent days. Diligent. You've got this. Let's do it.

Devote and schedule one half hour a day of golf practice for the specific purpose of the training in this book for five out of seven days for two weeks in a row. That is ten out of the next fourteen days. Go ahead. Do it now.

My favorite drill for developing the *Champion's Brain* is simulating a specific golf course on the driving range. You hit the tee and approach shots for each hole. This is the best tool for developing the Champion's Brain.

Chipping and putting are also excellent alternatives. Set performance goals for your practice time and keep track of your performance.

An example of one of my drills:

I putt three balls to six different holes on the practice green, eighteen holes total. If the average putt is 25' then par is a 2. My goal after all holed putts is three under par. Keep track of finished practice days on the

supplied chart. It is important to get the training completed within a start and stop point of fourteen days. Remember, you are working to establish an associative connection. It will take time to setup.

While practicing you must be as alone as possible. No talking to others or listening to music. I see so many great golfers listen to their favorite music while they are practicing. They are enjoying the associative connection with the beat, the time they heard the music or who they were with. All good things, but all creating a heavy emotional associative connection which interferes with their focus come game time. This actually makes you an up and down player according to how you are feeling emotionally that day. Not good. I will show you focus and clarity.

With *The Champion's Brain* you will be creating a brand new associative connection. The baseline must be clear.

Champion's Brain

Training Confirmation

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat

Make a check for each day you work on the
Champion's Brain.

Remember it takes time to build the associative
connection.

Now comes the important part.

Building the
Champion's Brain.

Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

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Chapter 5

Second Layer – The Mantra.

Building the *Champion's Brain*:

What is a mantra?

A mantra is a sound, syllable, word, or group of words that is considered capable of creating transformation.

Ever wake up at the beach and walk out onto the sand first thing in the morning? Ever been camping in the mountains and emerge into the cool morning air to hear the beautiful quiet? In both these cases the significance and beauty of your surroundings have taken over your

focus, they have all your attention. Challenges at home, the office, or wherever all take a backseat and tend to seriously fade. This is why if you can take two weeks of vacation together it is far better than one at a time. Your mind, body and soul have a better opportunity to reset. This is also why it takes some time and dedication to make what I am showing you a part of who you are.

I am going to show you how to re-set your mind. Like rebooting a computer we will clear out fragmented and half running programs. What I am about to do is show you how to almost hypnotize yourself to put your mind and emotions squarely on one objective: playing the best golf you have ever played.

You have heard "I was really in the zone today". How nice. Someone was fortunate enough that their mind and emotions connected for a while allowing them to play well. Things worked out to hand them a good round. It is also nice when you hit 21 in blackjack or draw the fourth ace on the last card in hold-em. I call it luck. You don't want to be dependent on the zone happening.

I will be showing you how to hit blackjack or draw the fourth ace in hold-em every time.

I am about to show you how to create the zone.
You will not stumble upon the zone or luck into it.
You will own it.

IMPORTANT:

Your mind will follow your mouth.

Did you hear that? Your mind will follow your mouth.

Then, your emotions follow your mind.

Did you hear that? Your emotions will follow your mind.

Finally, your body follows the combination of the mind and emotions.

Again:

Your mind will follow your mouth.

Your emotions follow your mind.

Your body follows the combination of the mind and emotions.

This is the key to the Champion's Brain.

These facts create the **associative connection** that I will show you how to build and over which you will have control.

Your Mantra:

Good line, good balance, good contact.

These are the three simple things you should say before every shot. Putt, chip, iron shot or drive, you should quietly say these words as your set up guide.

Good line: Once you have chosen the club for the proper distance, pick the line of your planned shot allowing for a small margin of error based on the tendencies of your normal ball flight.

Note: I only use margin of error planning for tight tee shots and heavily defended approach shots. All other shots, putts and chips are planned on line to go in the hole or precisely where you want them to go.

Good balance: You now have your line. Step into your stance and very simply check your balance.

Good contact: Use your practice swing to make sure you are comfortably finding the bottom of your swing near the ground. Keep your eyes on the point of contact thus raising the certainty of good contact with the ball. Take one or two practice swings. Don't take three, four or five.

You are now ready to step up to the ball for your shot.

Re-acquire your line and go.

Good line: Once you have chosen the club, pick the line of your planned shot allowing for a small margin of error based on the tendencies of your normal ball flight.



Good balance: You now have your line.
Step into your stance and very simply check
your balance.



Good contact: Use your practice swing to comfortably find the bottom of your swing near the ground. This will raise the certainty of good contact with the ball. One or two practice swings: **not** three, four or five.



**Step up to the ball for your shot.
Re-acquire your line and go.**

We're not done yet. You need to continue.

Some examples of what I have heard players (even pros) tell me they allow to go on in their minds pre-shot makes me wonder how they were able to safely drive to the golf course. There must be **-zero-** mental clutter to consistently make correct contact with a small white ball using a club traveling 80-130 miles an hour at impact with a directional margin of error of around a quarter of an inch. The focus must be total. It can and will be.

The reason I use and encourage "good line, good balance and good contact" is simple, critical and effective.

Using this mantra for your setup protects you with the following:

It keeps you focused on what is important.

It keeps you from overcomplicating any shot.

It keeps you from getting into distracting technical swing thoughts.

The habit of your certainty will also have an effect on your playing partners or competitors. It will put them on notice that you know what you are doing. Don't kid

yourself. If you happen to hit a bad shot that needs a serious recovery and you continue right on to it, make the recovery shot and don't change one iota of your focus, your playing partner or competition will begin to defeat themselves for you. You will feel them slip as you remain in control.

Using this mantra for your setup will help you **NOT** do the following:

Take too much time over your setup losing focus.

Over-complicate the thought process preparing for a shot.

Take unnecessary, unbalance practice swings.

Think unnecessarily about the mechanics of your swing.

You become target oriented and trust your swing mechanics.

Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

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that shot.

What happens if
I miss the shot?

This guy plays
so darn slow!

I've got this.
I am going to win.



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Good line, Good balance, Good contact.



Chapter 6

Third Layer - 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Clearing the Cave Full of Bats:

I like analogies....

When you start using the verbal mantra it will be like flipping on a light in a cave and seeing clearly a bunch of bats clinging to walls, ceiling and flying around your head. With **10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1** I will show you how to clear the bats from the cave. It is the completion of your mental defense shield, the *Champion's Brain*.

Remember the old saying “count to ten before getting angry”? Why is that? Because counting to ten is simple, uncluttered and it can unhook your emotions from the anger and effectively change your outlook. Sometimes you have to count to ten several times to lose the anger. Golf is a lot like that. You may have to use the count back several times pre-shot to retain the zone. Keep reading. This is really cool stuff.

I was playing in the final round of a championship that I eagerly wanted to win. I had been playing okay, but not great. I was tied for fourth place on the final day of the three day event. Four strokes off the lead. I shot a 62 once on this course so felt I had a great chance with a little better than average round. The first hole was a downhill 180 yard par 3. I stick it. Two foot tap in for a birdie. I am in the second to last group and kind of look up the hill to make sure the players I was chasing saw the birdie. That was great, now onto the next hole. The course was all backed up. It was twenty five minutes before the next tee shot. Twenty five minutes. The rest of the nine took two hours and forty minutes. This can happen in final rounds of tournaments, but I lost focus. I finished the first nine at six over on a course I can and

have shot even par with three clubs. The back nine sped up and I played it in three under, but it was too late. The winner shot even that day to hang on by a stroke. I could have gotten him, but didn't deliver.

I asked the victor later how he dealt with the slow speed of play. Clearly it hadn't affected him like it did me. He told me a story about a mutual friend who had won numerous tournaments and was also one of the nicest people to play golf with in the area. He is a fierce competitor and yet a gentleman sportsman. This individual could laugh, drink a beer and talk to the press or anyone during a round. He had a simple rule to help hold focus. Ten to fifteen seconds prior to when it looked like he would be able to take his shot he would count back. He would arrive at the ball ready to setup at one. Simple, isn't it? If you just do it when you play it doesn't work. The key to the *Champion's Brain* is the count back and the Mantra. When you do it in practice and drill the combination of the Mantra and the count back they become a Pavlov trigger. Like the Christmas song or the smell of food I spoke about earlier the drilling of the count back and the use of the mantra will take you emotionally to the place of focus you have

when drilling or practicing.

After working with many players on the *Champion's Brain* it was clear, some liked more time, some less. Some have liked a fifteen second count back, some ten. I am personally more comfortable with a count back from ten.

When do you use this count back?

The "bats" you illuminated in the cave using the mantra will fly around trying to get your attention. Slow play was the fifty pound bat for me that day. I couldn't shake the frustration and it cost me a possible win. Using the *Champion's Brain* I am no longer frustrated by slow play. I use the count back repeatedly to fend off any distracting thoughts, good or bad. The count back is simple. The use of the numbers is simple. It is a place mark to allow you to create the associative connection I spoke of earlier. Remember, through verbal repetition you will make the emotional connection to the words and in so doing the associative connection with your practice. You build that place of focus. The Christmas song, the smell, the Pavlov trigger. The count back and mantra are your song or smell.

If I told you that if you gave me five hours of your time I guarantee to lower your scores by half your handicap, would you give me that time? I think you would. With this value sense you can “Own the Zone” if you follow my guidelines for a half hour a day for ten of the next fourteen days.

One of the things that make golf so much of a challenge is the large number of distracting thoughts and emotions that can interrupt your focus. Let’s get rid of them.

The following are some of the “bats” you will now clearly see. You will have your own, but these are some of the basics.

You are on the first tee of a tournament or round.

Nerves. Not loose. Rushed. Just finished talking about everything. Adrenaline rush. Fear of people watching.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

Seeing your competitor hit a great shot. Dang, I need to match it.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

Shot into a tough green. What happens if I miss the shot?

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

You are playing well. I've got this. They're going down. I'm going to win.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

You are winning the match/tournament. What happens if I mess up. What will people or the paper say if I end up losing? I am a closer. I can do this.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

I should beat this guy. I know I'm better.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

Gee whiz the group in front is so slow. A guy in your own group is so slow.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

Your playing partners are chatting about family, friends, their game, your game or general gossip.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

I always push this shot.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Good line, good balance, good contact.

You can add to this list. This hole has my number or any long line of superstitions. They all need to go.

The bottom line is this. Anything you are thinking that is not about a good line, good balance and good contact will affect your shot. It is almost always negative. It is very important to note that good and positive thoughts are excellent throughout the process of your play except at the point of your setup. Positive thoughts though better than negative thoughts can also distract you from actually hitting a good shot. Focus and only focus is what you need. I saw a scratch golfer hole out on approach from 150 yards. Instead of creating momentum the great shot actually turned into a distraction. His good emotions and feelings from the great shot took over his focus. He proceeded to come apart.

One gentleman who went through this training told me a story that really illustrated another part of the same concept. He was playing great. He was on a “roll”. After eight holes his playing partner said, “do you realize you are six under par”? Well that was all he thought about afterwards and proceeded to triple bogie the next two holes.

Good thoughts during your swing can be as bad and distracting as bad thoughts.

Use the mantra. Use the count back.

The verbal mantra in your setup is your defense and shield to protect you from the invasive distracting thoughts that create an emotional response that will break your focus in the execution of a smooth golf shot.

The 10 to 1 count back keeps the way clear as you walk into your setup.

I have heard many times how a player was hitting every shot on the money during warm up at the driving range. They then proceed to play sloppy on the course, never hitting as well as at the range. I am going to show you how to incorporate what you do in practice into your game on the course.

Remember what I said about giving the speech or saying lines in a play.

Adrenaline rush.
Fear of people.

I need to match
that shot.

What happens if
I miss the shot?

This guy plays
so darn slow!

I've got this.
I am going to win.



10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Good line, Good balance, Good contact.



Chapter 7

THE CHAMPION'S BRAIN: Putting it all together.

It is this simple. Here it is.

Ready?

- Use the simulated round of golf I spoke of earlier. Play through a course you are familiar with on the practice range.
- With each shot step back to a distance like you would as if you were waiting or preparing to take your shot while actually on the course or the tee box.
- Choose your club for the correct shot and distance. As you approach your ball begin the verbal count down.
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
- At “1” you should arrive at the ball, ready to step into your setup.
- Use good line, good balance and good contact to finish your setup.
- Hit the shot.

- Repeat the *Champion's Brain* with every shot.
- You will begin to see the bats swirling in the cave. Your first reaction may be the thought about what other people on the driving range are thinking about you. Use the count back to block them. You will see other bats as you setup to the ball. Use the Mantra to block them. As you repeatedly block the bats, your distracting thoughts, you will soon see what clarity looks like. Once you see what clarity looks like you will be able to defend that clarity permanently using the *Champion's Brain*.
- After hours of connecting the count back and mantra to your setup during

the calm of practice you will have the power to create that calm or zone during competition.

- **Remember the song, the smell, the strength of those associative connections? You have built your own with the count back and mantra.**
- **You now have the focus that before seemed impossible or undependable.**
- **You create the zone. Your uncontrolled thoughts and emotions no longer control you.**
- **You own the zone.**

**Congratulations. You now have the
*Champion's Brain.***



Footnote from Bill Hamilton:

I am excited you have read the *Champion's Brain*. You will find that the bats you have discovered are getting smaller and easier to control. You will also find that where you used to have unclear thoughts and ninety percent mental distraction pre-shot you now have very clear focus and a five or ten percent distraction factor to use the *Champion's Brain* to control and eventually eliminate. It is your weapon and shield against distracting thoughts or situations when making the golf swing. As you use the *Champion's Brain* your experience as a competitor will improve. The "zone" that used to come and go is now yours. You are making the zone happen. I truly hope you have enjoyed the *Champion's Brain* and it is helping you be a better golfer as it has so many others.

All the best...

Bill Hamilton

About the Author:

Bill Hamilton is an award winning manager and coach. He has been involved with youth and adult sports for over thirty years. He is VP of Fairway Enterprise, LLP and inventor of the SolFlap. Bill is famous for doing what he is told can't be done. His accomplishments include high school golf championships as coach and many amateur golf titles. He has raised more than \$700,000 in support for the US Military, Katrina relief efforts and The First Tee.



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*Champion's Brain.***



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club in your bag.** www.championsbrain.com

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