



**WASHINGTON STATE**

**B A S E B A L L**

# THE FAB FIVE

Of Cougar Pitching

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1. Goal Setting / Affirmations

2. Positive Self-Talk

3. Visualization

4. The Breath

5. The Routine



# GOAL SETTING

“Maintaining focus under stress by setting constant short term goals.”

- ULTIMATE
  - OUTCOME
  - PROCESS
  - DEFAULT
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# SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING

- Aim High
  - Separate yourself from the day hikers.
- Be Specific
  - Must be clear and focused (powerful).
- Write Down
  - Just a dream
  - Too vague for mind to grasp – no passion.
  - Break into sub-goals = action plan
- Make Measurable
  - Measurement = motivation
  - “I want to be in MLB” vs “I will make my debut on...”
- Make Attainable
  - Accomplishing a goal, no matter how small, builds your self-confidence.
- Use Properly
  - Daily, twice a day.
  - Read with passion and conviction.
  - The more you affirm your goals, the more the subconscious begins to accept them as true.

“Properly written goals provide direction and energy and inspire you into action.”

# ULTIMATE GOALS

- The long range goals you want to accomplish.
- What do you want to achieve over your career?
- What would the guests at your retirement party be recalling?
- Aim high!!!
  - Too many don't reach their goals because they set them too low and hit them, instead of setting them too high and missing.

# OUTCOME GOALS

- Result oriented, often called product goals.
- Measurable and most effective when they focus on what you want to achieve over the next 12 months or season.
- Most commonly used in baseball as you compare yourself to others.
- Uncontrollable!
- Powerful if you work hard and stay on task.

# PROCESS GOALS

- Measurable but focus on the action or behavior you are seeking, thus they are under your control.
- Remove the stress of the OG as they focus on the process or action rather than the result.
- Must motivate you to action to be measurable.
- More relaxed as players don't focus on stats.

# DEFAULT GOALS

- Danger ahead!!!
- Set subconsciously and are generally negative and counter productive.
- Set randomly and without conscious thought.
- If you don't have concrete goals (your dominant thoughts), then the thoughts that occupy your mind that you dwell on become goals by default.

# AFFIRMATIONS

- Simple, one sentence statements describing the desired end-results you want to create.
- Used properly, they are interpreted as reality by your subconscious mind.
- They must create emotion – see them, say them, feel them.

# AFFIRMATION WRITING

- Change your belief before you're behavior.
  - Pointless to affirm new behaviors if you don't change your beliefs first.
  - Failure to change main reason affirmations don't work.
- Build personal pay value into your affirmation.
  - Pay value = positive feelings.
  - Positive emotions cause them to "take" within your subconscious.
- Repeat the READ/PICTURE/FEEL process often enough to imprint it on your subconscious.
  - The imprinting process:
    - WORDS – read the affirmation
    - PICTURES – visualize your words
    - FEELINGS – feel the emotion
    - REALITY – record in your subconscious
  - Twice a day minimum – more is better.
  - Be relaxed and free of distractions when doing them.

# AFFIRMATION WORKSHEET

- What do you want to change?
- What is the current reality?
  - Describe the way it is now.
  - Why is it a problem?
  - How do you feel about the way it is?
  - Describe your own behavior that you want to change.
  - What are your deepest beliefs about this situation?
- What is the vision or new reality?
  - Describe the way it will be after the change you seek.
  - Describe the way you'll behave to generate the results you want.
  - What beliefs will you need in order to support these new behaviors?
  - How will you feel when you bring your vision into reality?
  - What's the pay value for you?

# GOAL / AFFIRMATION SHEET

<b>ARNOLD</b>	I will prepare myself for the best chance at success by using mental imagery to visualize myself being great.	I will be below 10% body fat by continuing to push myself with conditioning 4 times a week.	I will perfect my front side by emphasizing 3 ball drill whenever I play catch. I will trust my routine because they are my backbone.
<b>CAMUS</b>	I will have a great curveball because elite pitchers have 3 pitches to 2 locations. I will play spin catch and think fastball when throwing my curveball.	I will keep my frontside closed when coming down the hill because a firm front side allows better direction and finish.	I will get to the plate in 1.3 seconds or sooner from the stretch because it allows me to dominate the running game and gives our catcher a best chance for success.
<b>CONLEY</b>	I will strictly follow the throwing program because throwing with intent will allow me to gain "inches" on my peers.	I will lift and condition with great intensity because being physically prepared will aid my mental toughness in competition.	I will live a healthy lifestyle to assure my body is properly fueled, allowing me to perform at the highest level possible.
<b>LECKENBY</b>	I will improve and strengthen my fastball because I believe that it is my best pitch and its going to help make me and my team succeed at the highest potential.	I will improve my off-speed pitches because with these I will be an elite pitcher in every aspect	I am a great pitcher and will succeed in whatever role I take on this staff because I stay in the present moment, have great confidence, believe in my stuff and take it one pitch at a time.
<b>WISE</b>	I am a better leader because I display the core covenants of Cougar Baseball	I have a better change up because I develop it in bullpens and while I play catch	I will gain weight because I follow the weight gain program and eat healthy

# POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- CONTROL YOUR SELF-TALK
- INPUT vs IMPRINT

**“Changing your pattern of thinking will change your attitude, and your performance will follow.”**

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# CONTROL YOUR SELF-TALK

- We speak 300-1000 words per minute in our mind.
- These words help develop a belief of who we are as a player.
- Beliefs are not necessarily the truth.
- Beliefs help create your comfort zone.
- Ask yourself a couple questions:
  - Do I know that this self-talk or belief is 100% true?
  - What do I know that contradicts this negative self-talk or belief?

# INPUT vs IMPRINT

- You are today based on previous self-talk you hold in your mind.
  - You are tomorrow what your self-talk is today.
  - Make a choice – decide what you want to hear as input (negative) and imprint (positive).
  - The subconscious mind will work 24/7 to make sure the images you create in your mind become reality.
  - Your self-talk and the resulting images will determine your current behaviors.
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# VISUALIZATION

**“Your body cannot tell the difference between a real and imagined experience.”**

- MENTAL  
RECALL
  - MENTAL  
REHEARSAL
-

# MENTAL RECALL

- Pressing the Rewind Button
  - Visualizing by reflecting back on previous success.
  - We often recall what went wrong.
  - We control affirmations, thus we must control what we recall.
  - Incorporates two of the most successful learning tools:
    - Success breeds success.
    - Repetition

**I x V = R**  
**Image times**  
**Vividness**  
**equals Reality”**

# MENTAL RECALL

- The How To of Mental Recall

- Select a proper experience
- Use great detail
- Future encounters
- Experience it from your own eyes
- Use actual game speed and images
- Complete the situation

- Recall Directions

- Get comfortable
- Close your eyes, focus from within, feel yourself relaxing.
- Focus on body sinking down, slowing down, feeling heaviness and feeling warmth somewhere in your body only as you exhale. With each exhale sink deeper. (1-2 minutes)
- Now recall the experience. (1-3 minutes)
- When finished, take and breath as you stretch and open your eyes.

# MENTAL REHEARSAL

- **How Mental Rehearsal Works**
  - As you picture your new self, the SC finds ways to accomplish this, guiding you towards your new self-image.
  - Cognitive Dissonance – the feeling of discomfort when holding two or more conflicting cognitions (beliefs, ideas, etc.)
  - Successful rehearsal involves controlling and guiding your imagination so that you picture yourself achieving your goals and performing them perfectly or near perfectly.
  - **Make the perfect pitch 100% of the time.**
  - Enormous benefits:
    - Increases self-image and confidence.
    - Rehearse all future situations you may encounter.
    - Reinforces a positive neuromuscular blueprint.
    - Helps reduce stress.

# MENTAL REHEARSAL

- The How To of Mental Rehearsal
  - Develop the scenario
  - Use great detail
  - Future encounters
  - See it from within
  - Use actual game speed and images
  - Complete the situation
- Rehearsal Directions
  - Get comfortable
  - Close your eyes, focus from within, feel yourself relaxing.
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# THE BREATH

- AROUSAL CONTROL
- BREATHE

**“The use of slow, deliberate breathing to reduce stress and maintain task focus.”**

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# AROUSAL CONTROL

- Stress can cause negative emotions.
- Body will tense up and either fight, flee or freeze.
- We lose our ability to think and become reactive within the situation.
- The breath takes us away from focusing on the situation and as we normalize our breathing, we can calm our responses.
- Our brain stabilizes and we start to think rationally again.
- Wire our brain to calm ourselves under stress and make more effective choices.

# BREATHE

- The benefits of a slow, steady breath:
  - Puts your focus on the present moment.
  - Enables you to check-in with yourself to see if you are in control.
  - Helps you get control.
  - Helps you release negatives.
  - Energizes you when you are feeling sluggish.
  - Helps you shift from conscious thinking to unconscious trusting.
  - Helps establish a sense of rhythm in your pitching – your routine.

# THE ROUTINE

- CIRCLE OF TRUST
- ROUTINE DEVELOPMENT

**“Players who rely on factors outside of their control for the mental preparation are inconsistent players.”**

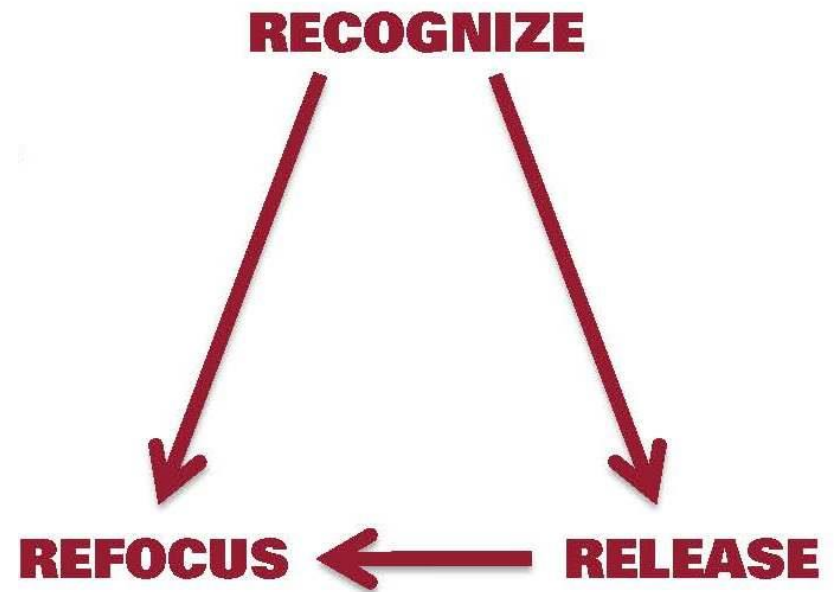
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# CIRCLE OF TRUST

- Self-Control
  - Brain = Body = Performance
  - Awareness is like a traffic light.
- Plan
  - Commit to the plan
  - Visualize the plan
- Trust
  - Transition from thinking to trust
  - Trust what you've got
  - Why should I trust myself?

# ROUTINE DEVELOPMENT

- Why build a routine?
  - Eliminates randomness
  - Focus on things you can control
- Recognize where you are at
  - What light are you in?
- Release the negative
  - What is your release?
  - Where is your focal point?
- Refocus on the target
  - When do you breathe?
  - Commit to and execute THIS pitch.



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