

# Training Habits of the Elite, Q6

## Important Mental Skills

*As mentioned on the website before, One of the players in our squad (pBus) did a bit of research during the covid lockdown about elite players and the manner of their training.*

*He reached out to numerous State, National and International players (23 in fact) to pick their brains and absorb as much information to adapt into his training regime to reach his goal.*

*The questions asked each player of interest was as follows:*

***- What mental skills do you think are important?***

*Below are the responses to the above question with player names deleted for privacy:*

- Flow state of mind and the impact of music on relaxation.
- Most important mental skill is maturity and people management.
- Important mental skill is the ability to be able to switch off to enable hyperfocus.
- Thrive on pressure is the best mental skill to have (want to play the big shot again and again).
- Concentration and dedicated focus is key mental skill.
- Breathing is a good mental skill, keeps tempo, inhale / exhale, approach mat and squat down, inhale / exhale, find line, inhale / exhale, inhale on swing back, exhale on release.
- Follow process not outcome – control the controllable aspects.
- Mental toughness is the most important skill for bowls – 80% mental, 20% skill.
- Get into the poker face every time you play. Be the brick wall that always looks the same and responds the same way. Become habitual. Consistency with composure is key. Same body language and mental toughness no matter what the situation is on the scoreboard or skill execution.
- Mentally acting the same no matter what the situation is (Rodger Federer mentality).
- Find out what mindset and attitude makes you play best.
- Find the balance of being able to switch on and off.
- Have a trigger word as walking down the green to really switch on and hyper focus when needed (build it into your pre-shot routine).

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- Always be a positive beacon for the team, never get angry at others and always have the never say die attitude.
- Keep the focus on the mat, always focusing on the bowl you are about to play. Block all other factors out.
- Mindfulness keeps you process focused rather than outcome focused
- Mentality of thinking ‘now that I have nailed it, I have figured it out and my opponent is in trouble’.
- Develop the ability to play the shots when it matters and back yourself to get it. Find the right mindset for you when playing those kinds of shots.
- Always think about what you are doing and think ‘will it make the boat go faster?’
- Develop an alert system for when things are going wrong (making the mistake twice in a row).
- Learn to have thick skin and be a mental fortress when under the pump.
- Intense concentration is the most important mental skill to develop. Learn what works for you when you use your concentration.
- Mental toughness and staying calm are the keys to playing well. Don’t let the emotions get the better of you and always stay calm as it helps to make good decisions.

This website will provide all twenty three (23) player responses over the year 2023 in the WHAT’S NEW menu.

That is a lot of interviews and a wealth of information to all we bowlers, and coaches, and as good an insight as to how you the bowler can adjust your thinking, your approach to markedly improve your game based on this knowledge.

Keep an eye out for the next commentary on elite player training on this website.

**Coach Lachlan Tighe, 2023**