

6. Introduction – Getting into The Zone

You may have heard the phrase, “you are what you eat.” This is even now the title of a popular T.V. series in several countries. The age-old adage of “you are what you eat” is of course very true, and we’ll discuss diet a little later on. However for now I’d like to change that timeless phrase a little and make the following statement:

You are what you think!

50 Your thought processes are responsible for everything about you – who you are, where you are, what you are doing, why you are doing it, and even how you are doing it. It is these very thought processes that are responsible for you holding a copy of this book! You are, quite simply, a result of your own thinking. How you perceive the world and indeed how you perceive yourself, as well as how you react and respond to these perceptions, is based entirely on how your mind operates. You may like to think of your brain as a computer – one that is far more advanced than any piece of technology ever created by mankind. However as with all computers, regardless of how powerful, the phrase “junk in, junk out” still applies.

Perception

As a living, thinking, and feeling being, you have an immense intellectual and emotional capacity, whether you admit, or are fully aware of this fact or not. Given that your mind controls your perception of yourself and your perception of the world around you, it is logical then to say that if your mind perceives the proverbial glass as being ‘half-empty’, then that for you is a truth. Contrarily, if your mind perceives the same glass as being ‘half-full’, then that for you is a truth. Your particular perception of the glass will remain a ‘truth’ for you unless some external force, source of information, or realisation changes that perception.

It’s more than just positive thinking

Of course there is a lot more to becoming a successful performer than simply positive thinking. As we’ve already seen, it takes a combination of cognitive (mental) attributes and physical skills, a resistance to external interference, and an ideal level of positive performance arousal – being in The Zone – to perform at your optimum level. As shown countless times in the history of performing and performers, and as The Alternative Performance Equation and other diagrams in Part One show, you simply cannot fulfil your true potential and achieve an optimal level of performance if you harbour negative thought processes, performance anxieties, doubt and the like, or if you become over-excited or apathetic in your performing situations. In other words as a performer, if your ‘computer’ is fed wrong information (“junk in”) or **runs the wrong programs**, you will invariably get poor results (“junk out”).

Reprogramming

However, if you can alter, or 'reprogram' your state of mind and channel your energies correctly to suit your performing situation, you can optimise and improve your overall level of performance by achieving an ideal amount of positive performance arousal – you can in other words, with the right 'programming', learn to perform in The Zone.

The tools and techniques here in Part Two are designed to help you 'program' that fantastic 'computer' of yours so that it can work better for you in performing situations. These techniques provide your 'computer' (your mind) with quality input, allowing it to **run the right programs**. By using the techniques here in Part Two of *Performing in The Zone*, you can learn to be in the right state of mind for your performing situations, enabling you to unleash your true performing potential, and achieve an optimal level of performance, regardless of your performance sphere.

About Part Two

The many techniques in Part Two are presented in alphabetical order for ease of reference. There is a lot of information here, and many powerful tools, techniques, and exercises which you can experiment with, and adopt into your performing life.

To begin with, read through the various techniques provided here, experiment with them individually, and be sure to complete all of the exercises. Once you have some experience with the techniques, and when you feel ready, continue by following through with The 12 Week Performance Success Programme in Part Three. This programme has been designed to help you to enforce structure, provide motivation, and ultimately give you a massive boost in your journey towards performing in The Zone.