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Mental Hitting Exercises Workbook

Coaches: Use the following exercises to help your players develop a strong mental hitting game. Provide each player a copy of the exercise, and allow him time to carefully think through and complete the exercise. Assist him when necessary, but encourage him to dig deep for his own personal answers and examples.

Exercise #1: OVERCOMING FEAR

Identifying and acknowledging your fears is the first step in conquering them.

✓ *Write down your 3 biggest fears:*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Fear can be defeated through action. Replacing fearful, negative and nervous thoughts with positive thinking, visualization and self-talk will help you triumph over your fears.

✓ *Develop a plan for overcoming each fear:*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

*"Never let the fear of striking out keep you from coming up to bat."
~Babe Ruth*

Exercise #2: POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Replacing negative or fearful thoughts with positive ones has been proven to improve sports performance.

- ✓ Write down your 3 positive self-talk statements you can use during games to help your focus:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

It takes practice to train your brain to clear negative thoughts. Repeating a positive self-talk statement before and during every at-bat will help to focus your brain.

- ✓ Before each pitch in practice, say your statement out loud.

*"See the ball, hit the ball."
~Pete Rose*

Exercise #3: POSITIVE VISUALIZATION

The last picture in a hitter's mind before the action takes place is what will most likely happen.

- ✓ Spend 5 minutes every night visualizing yourself in positive hitting situations. Always visualize success!
- ✓ Write down a positive hitting situation that you can visualize right before stepping into the box. Use as much detail as possible.

"Athletes are born winners, they're not born losers, and the sooner you understand this, the faster you can take on a winning attitude and become successful in life."

~Charles R. Sledge Jr.

Exercise #4: LETTING GO

One bad at-bat does not have to affect the rest of your game as long as YOU don't allow it to.

- ✓ Work with your teammates to develop a method that will help you let go of a poor at-bat.

*"Baseball is ninety percent mental. The other half is physical."
~Yogi Berra*

Exercise #5: SMART GOALS

A goal is a plan for competing tasks that will improve your performance.

- ✓ Write down 3 hitting goals using the SMART guidelines. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- ✓ Review these goals on a daily basis and record your progress on a monthly calendar.

*When asked what he wanted to accomplish after hitting .406 in one season,
"Simply learn more and keep improving."
~Ted Williams*

Exercise #6: PRACTICE ROUTINE

Successful players possess desire, dedication, determination and discipline.

- ✓ Develop a 15 minute routine that you will use before everyone else gets to the field.

*"There may be people that have more talent than you, but there is no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do."
~Derek Jeter*

Exercise #7: HITTING ROUTINE

A strong hitting routine will help you stay in the present and get your mind and body ready to hit.

- ✓ Create your own individual hitting routine:

1. Visualization: _____

2. Preparatory action: _____

3. Self-talk: _____

4. Relaxation technique: _____

- ✓ Use the same hitting routine for EVERY practice and game time at-bat.

*"It's hard to beat a person who never gives up."
~Babe Ruth*

Exercise #8: QUALITY AT-BATS

Try not to get hung up on too many statistics, like your batting average. Instead, concentrate on the number of quality at-bats you are getting. The hits will be produced if you have a high percentage of quality at-bats.

- ✓ Start keeping a written record of your quality at-bat percentages.
- ✓ After one month, compare the beginning percentage with the ending percentage to see if you have improved. If not, make adjustments to your goals for the next month.

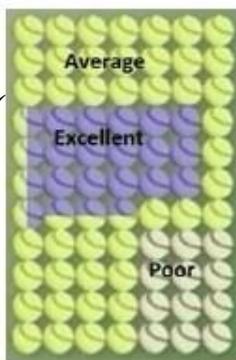
"Baseball is the only field of endeavor which a man can succeed three times out of ten and be considered a good performer."

~Ted Williams

Exercise #9: STRIKE ZONE

A hitter gains a tremendous advantage by understanding the strike zone and his own effective hitting areas.

- ✓ Set up a mirror and tape your strike zone on to it with masking tape. Practice swinging in front of it to get a feel for your exact strike zone. The strike zone is 17" wide (the width of the plate) and extends from your armpits to your knees.



- ✓ Draw a strike zone diagram and start tracking which are your productive and unproductive hitting zones.

"Be on time. Bust your butt. Play smart. And have some laughs while you're at it!"

~Whitey Herzog

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