

# Mental toughness

**MENTAL  
TOUGHNESS**

Jóhann Ingi Gunnarsson, psychologist

# Mental toughness - definition

- Mental toughness is having developed psychological edge that enables you to be more consistent, determined, focused, confident and in control under pressure
- It can make all the difference between a good performance and a bad performance

# Mental toughness

Mental toughness is keeping your cool no matter what players, coaches or spectators are doing. It's being able to block out what's not important



**Cool Heads  
Calm Thinking**

# Assignment

What characterizes mentally  
tough referees?

# What are our values?

- Positiveness
- Belief
- Consistency
- Composure
- Courage
- Resilience

An open book is shown from a slightly elevated perspective. The left page is blank and white. The right page is also white and contains three lines of black text. The book's spine is visible on the left, and the edges of several pages are visible at the top. The background is a plain, light color.

A good referee

To be a good referee  
you have to be a good person

# Pressure

Under pressure, people can perform

15% worse

or 15% better





# Distraction technique

- A referee needs to control his mind
- Technique:
  - Pick a word/gesture that calms you down and relaxes you when times get hard or you notice that you are getting frustrated
- It is important to control your thoughts because your actions tend to follow your thoughts

# Mental toughness - self belief

1. Build the belief in yourself everyday – visualize success before each game
2. Write down your successes and accomplishments
3. Review them and add to them everyday (even the small ones)

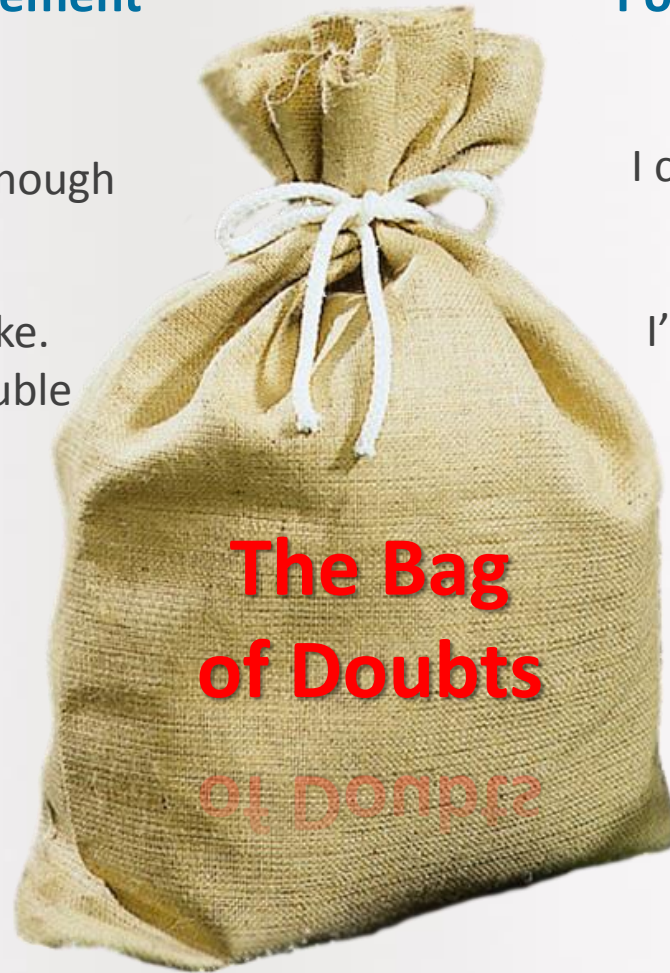
## Negative statement

I'm not good enough

I made a mistake.  
Now I'm in trouble

This is not  
my day

I'm having  
trouble  
concentrating



## The Bag of Doubts

of doubts

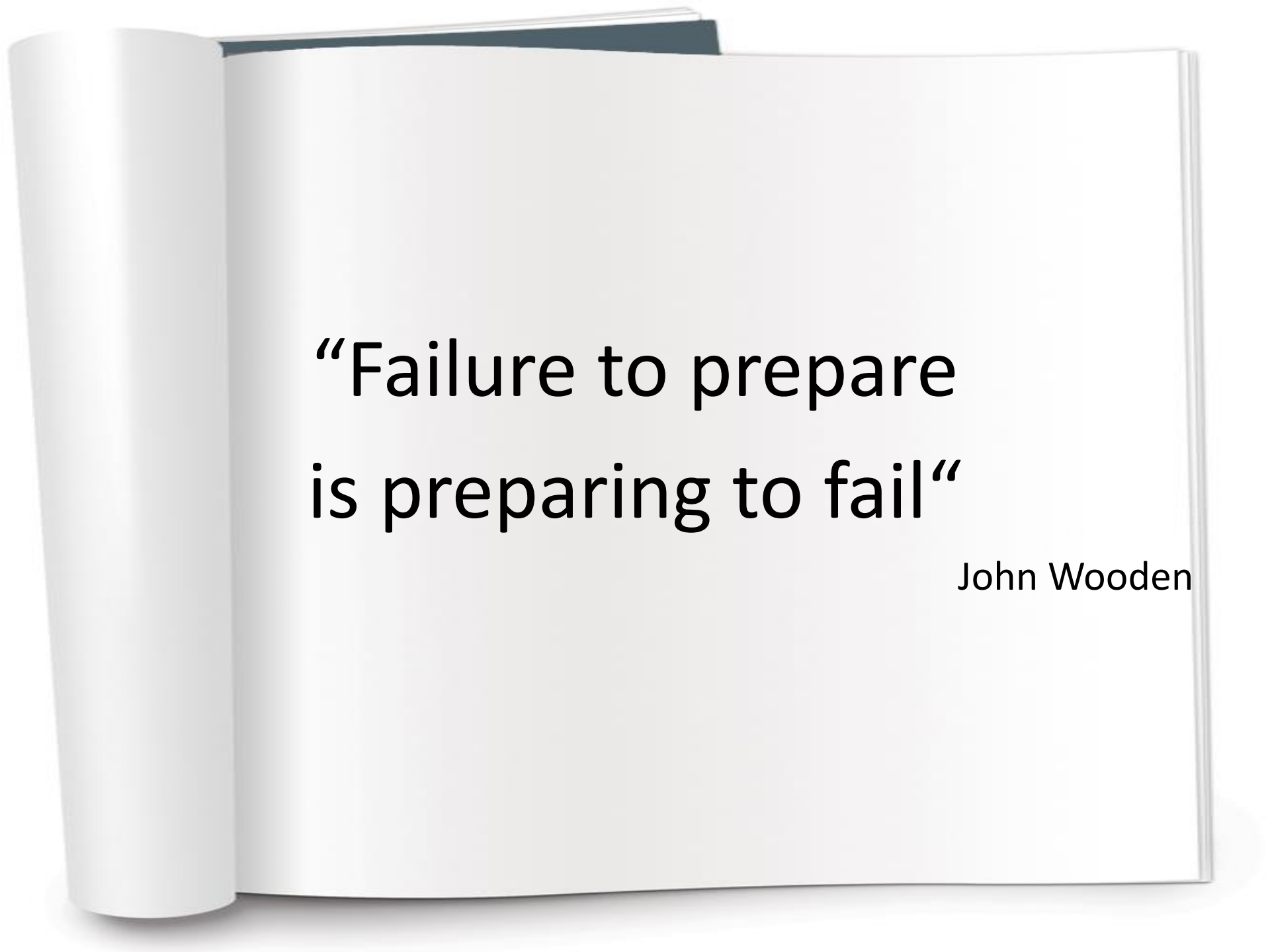
## Positive reframing

I can do this

I'll get the next one right

I am determined  
to make this my  
day

I can concentrate  
when I want and  
now I want to

An open book is shown from a slightly elevated perspective, lying flat. The pages are white and appear to be blank except for the text. The book's spine is visible on the left side. The quote is centered on the page in a large, black, sans-serif font.

“Failure to prepare  
is preparing to fail”

John Wooden

# Mental toughness - adversity

- When you encounter adversity, remember, the best referees don't just face adversity, they embrace it, knowing it's not a dead end but a stepping stone to something greater and better
- Adversity is where your belief is tested and where true toughness is tested
- Working through adversity is a great chance to reach a higher level
  - ❖ As an individual
  - ❖ As a team



# Mental toughness - failure

- When you fail, find the lesson in it – and then recall a time when you have succeeded
- When your own self-doubt crowds your mind, replace it with positive thoughts and self-talk



# The 4 C's

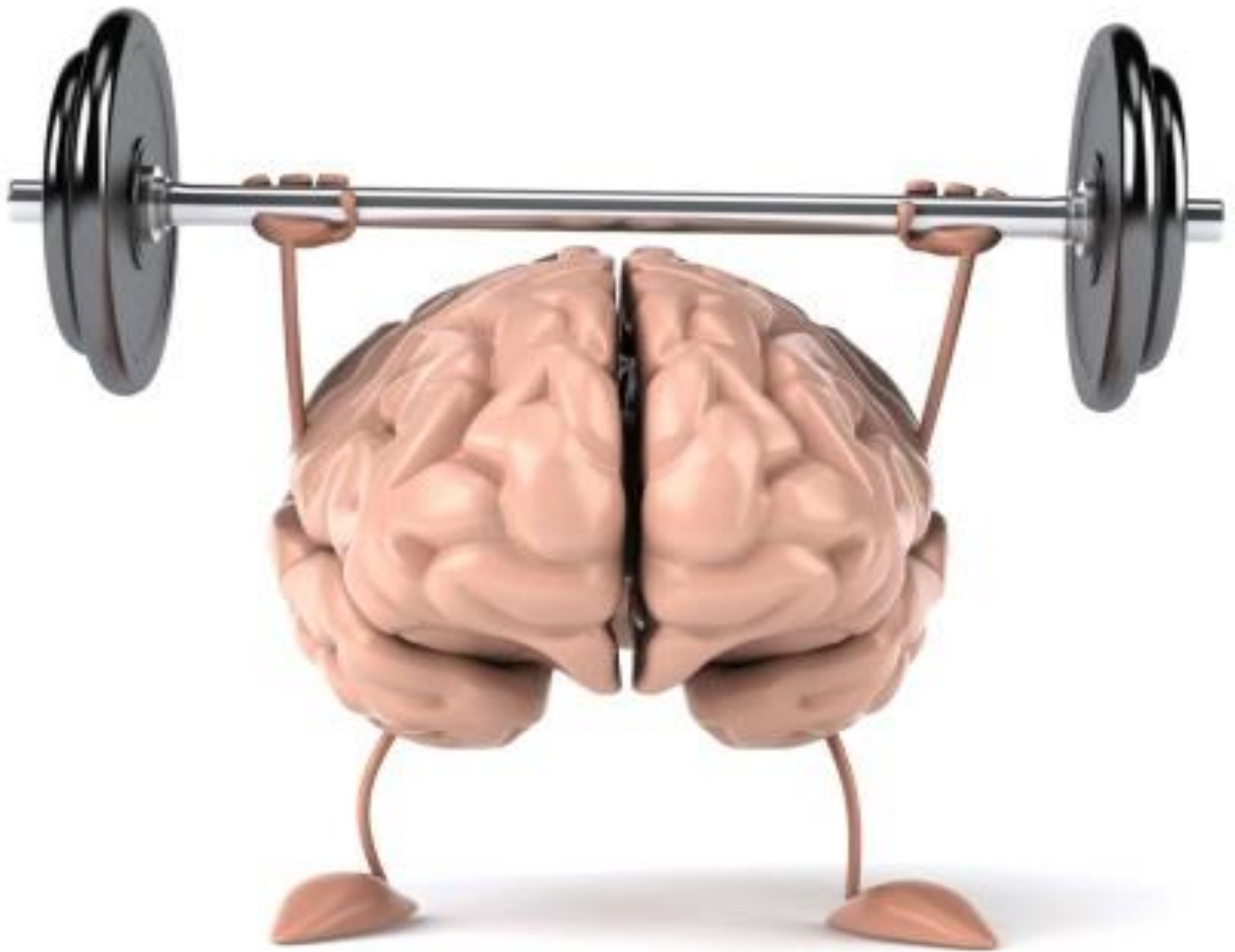


I'm:

- Cool
- Concentrated
- Confident
- Consistent

# Remember...

- Develop strength – on and off the court
- “Fighter mentality”
- Quitting is not an option. Finish what you start



# Assignment

What can we do to develop our  
mental toughness?