

# CLEMSON FOOTBALL: MENTAL TOUGHNESS IN A POSITIVE CULTURE

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CLEMSON UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL**

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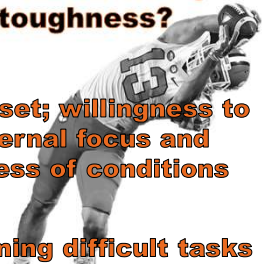
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**Question: What comes to mind when you think about mental toughness?**



**Mental toughness is a mindset; willingness to endure and maintain external focus and emotional control regardless of conditions**

**Mental toughness is performing difficult tasks repeatedly, operating under adverse conditions, under pressure and high demand**

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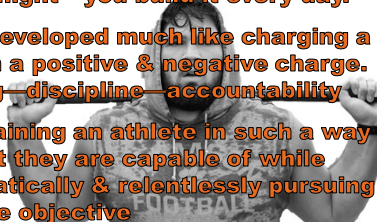
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## Thoughts on Mental Toughness

**Mental toughness, just like leadership, has to be developed. The same holds true for physical toughness & competitive toughness. You do not get mentally tough overnight - you build it every day.**

**Mental toughness is developed much like charging a battery...It takes both a positive & negative charge. Coaching—teaching—discipline—accountability**

**Mental toughness—training an athlete in such a way as to find out what they are capable of while progressively, systematically & relentlessly pursuing the objective**



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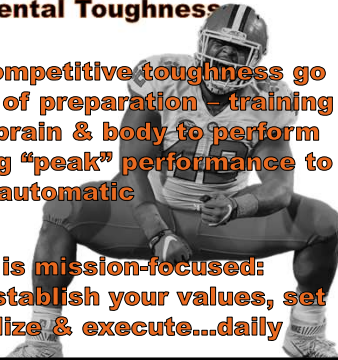
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**Thoughts on Mental Toughness**

**Mental toughness & competitive toughness go hand-in-hand. Intensity of preparation – training to win conditions the brain & body to perform under pressure allowing “peak” performance to become automatic**

**Mental toughness is mission-focused: Define your mission, establish your values, set the standard, visualize & execute...daily**



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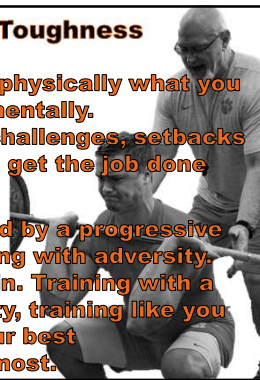
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**Thoughts on Mental Toughness**

**Mental toughness is to impose physically what you are committed to mentally. Grit, resiliency, perseverance, challenges, setbacks while maintaining a belief to get the job done**

**Mental toughness is developed by a progressive system of consistently training with adversity. Training with a mindset to win. Training with a purpose, training with intensity, training like you fight...to be at your best when it matter most.**



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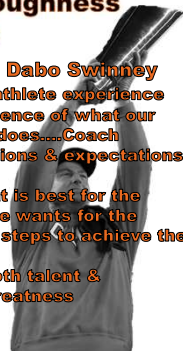
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**Keys to Developing Mental Toughness in a Positive Culture**

- 1. Leadership – starts with our Head Coach, Dabo Swinney**
  - **Vision & Mission** of total program...student-athlete experience
  - **Culture** – the living, breathing, collective essence of what our team, staff, administrators believes, says & does...Coach Swinney's thoughts, beliefs, convictions, actions & expectations of the group
  - **Student-Athlete** – Coach Swinney wants what is best for the player...what he wants for the player, what he wants for the team, and how to communicate the vision & steps to achieve the mission
  - **Character** – you want to build a team with both talent & character...character drives talent toward greatness



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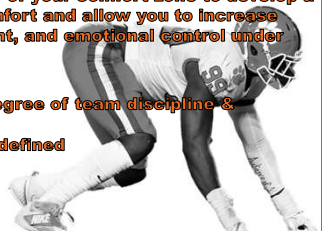
### Keys to Developing Mental Toughness in a Positive Culture

#### 2. Mindset

- Positive thinking & belief
- Continuously straining outside of your comfort zone to develop a level of familiarity with discomfort and allow you to increase your decision-making, judgment, and emotional control under stress

#### 3. Discipline & Accountability

- System in place with a high degree of team discipline & accountability
- Team commandments clearly defined
- Accountability teams




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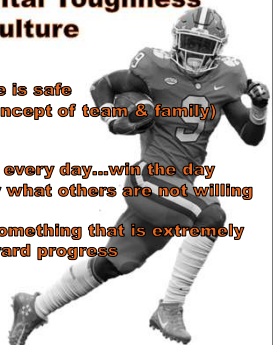
### Keys to Developing Mental Toughness in a Positive Culture

#### 4. Psychological Safety

- The athlete wants to know & feel he is safe
- Trust factor – family (nourish the concept of team & family)

#### 5. Work Ethic

- It is a choice to get better or worse every day...win the day
- Work harder, endure more, do today what others are not willing to do... "embrace the grind"
- Consciously accept or appreciate something that is extremely unpleasant but unavoidable for forward progress




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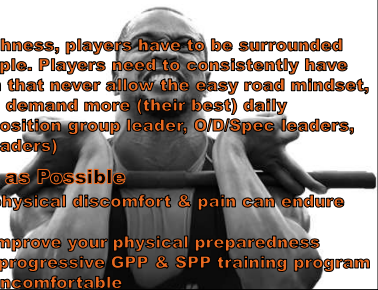
### Keys to Developing Mental Toughness in a Positive Culture

#### 6. Player-driven Program

- Iron sharpens iron
- To increase mental toughness, players have to be surrounded with mentally tough people. Players need to consistently have teammates around them that never allow the easy road mindset, that challenge them and demand more (their best) daily
- 4 layers of leadership (position group leader, O/D/Spec leaders, 13'ers, 3'ers - team leaders)

#### 7. Get as Physically Tough as Possible

- Those that can endure physical discomfort & pain can endure more mentally
- To get mentally tough, improve your physical preparedness through a systematic & progressive GPP & SPP training program
- Get comfortable being uncomfortable




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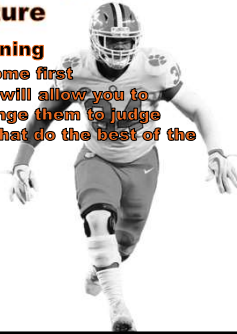
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**Keys to Developing Mental Toughness  
in a Positive Culture**

**8. Love Tough – Demanding, Not Demeaning**

- I believe in tough love, but love must come first
- If your team knows you love them they will allow you to challenge them to be their best. Challenge them to judge themselves against the world's best. What do the best of the best do?




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**5 Edges of  
Clemson strength training**

- 1. ATTITUDE & WORK ETHIC**
- 2. MENTAL, PHYSICAL, & COMPETITIVE TOUGHNESS**
- 3. DISCIPLINE / ACCOUNTABILITY**
- 4. WIN THE DAY WITH FOCUSED INTENSITY**
- 5. EARN EVERYTHING WITH FOCUSED PASSION**

ALLIN

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**Special Thanks**

- Jon Gordon, The Jon Gordon Companies
- Milt Lowder, The Lowder Group
- Joe McNamara, Founder & President, IMPACT

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