



1000 For 1

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I recently had the pleasure of meeting and listening to Alice Miller, a former 8-time winner on the LPGA Tour, including one major, the 1985 Nabisco Dinah Shore. She provided numerous success lessons to the golfers in the group, but one in particular stood out for me. She described how she loved to hit wedges while growing up in her youth, as a college player, and even on tour. In fact, she depicted the exact area where as a young golfer she would hit these wedges for countless hours. She then went on to recall a story of an LPGA event where she was in a position to win. She had a wedge shot to the green – one that she had hit a “1000” times while growing up as a young golfer on the west coast. She only had “1” shot in this situation. Those 1000’s of wedges paid off at this time - she put the wedge close, putted out and won the tournament.

Outside of being a great event from an incredible person and champion, her story reminded me of mental training. I ask golfers to do many things over and over again, such as Alice did with her wedges. Some of these exercises include journaling about their practice sessions and tournament rounds and conducting consistent imagery sessions before and after practices and tournaments. At times, these drills can feel mundane and seem even pointless because there is no immediate gratification much of the time. But Alice’s story reminded me that mental training is a vital component that needs to be repeated despite the lack of instant reward. Just like practicing wedges, it is a tool that makes better and more consistent players, but also prepares them for that one moment in time that can change the course of a career. In Alice’s case, she won a golf tournament at the highest level of play and also experienced high financial reward. For you, it may mean winning a conference or club championship. The level of play does not matter – just being ready at that “1” moment in time does.

It takes courage and discipline to do the right things over and over again for years – such as journaling and hitting wedges – but they will pay off when a certain moment presents itself. And you want to be ready for it because it does not come around often. As Alice pointed out quite wonderfully, “I lost hundreds of more tournaments than I won.” Thus, when you get tired of hitting wedges or doing mental conditioning – even though you know it is important – just remember, **“1000 for 1.”**