

“VISUALIZATION, KNOWLEDGE, AND CONFIDENCE”

As some of my friends may know, **I really enjoy playing table tennis** (translated: ping-pong). I have played **weekly for over 20 years**. Early on I **reached a plateau**, or level of skill, that **I had not been able to exceed** no matter what I did. **Bad habits** in my stroke, footwork, and follow-through seemed **too deeply engrained** for me to change. Recently I was exposed to material that emphasized **the importance of visualization in improving performance in just about anything**. **I had the knowledge** about what I needed to do to improve my game, **but not the confidence** to go ahead and do it. I would have short periods of better play, then **tense up and relapse** back to old bad habits, **losing confidence** (hang with me, this **is** an article about fishing!). Confidence in any activity helps one to relax, concentrate on the basic essentials, and improve performance. **I then began to visualize myself doing proper strokes and footwork before I played**. I seemed to be more relaxed and confident when I played. This resulted in **a big improvement in my game**.

Substitute the sport of **fishing for table tennis**. **Most** Spoonpluggers seem to have the **basic knowledge from Buck Perrys’ study material**, but they may **lack the confidence to follow guidelines exactly**. Often, when fishing gets tough, fishermen will **resort to old methods** and habits that may have worked in the past, but are not found in our guidelines. Usually, these methods don’t work either, and our **confidence level takes a real hit**. When you read in Buck Perrys’ Book “Spoonplugging”, check out the last **chapter on Mental Aspects**. It emphasizes the **critical importance of confidence in our fishing**. His book gives us the knowledge that has been proven effective in catching big fish over many, many years. Yet **that knowledge requires confidence in it to persist and become a successful fisherman**. What we **need to get rid of** is the anxiety or **fear that we won’t catch fish**. Buck also talks about **visualization in helping us gain that confidence**. **Preplanning** a trip, **studying a map, picturing in your mind which structures you will be fishing and how you will be fishing them**, these all **require** at least some **visualization**.

I believe that **visualization of goals, procedures, results, and especially structure is a very effective way of building confidence**. **Don’t be afraid to “daydream” either**. **Picture in your mind what results you would like** in your fishing **and what you need to do to obtain those results**. The more **detail and time** you spend doing this, the better. The **subconscious mind accepts those visions as true**, giving you more **confidence in yourself**. Of course, **getting out on the water** and actually doing it **is important!** But then you will have more confidence in what you are doing and will **do it in a more relaxed, effective, and successful manner**.

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