

# Psychological Preparation

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Everyone has seen the epic movie *Rocky IV*, in which underdog Rocky Balboa defeats the undefeated Russian champion, Ivan Drago, to avenge the death of his great friend, Apollo Creed. In this movie, Rocky goes to Russia, lives in the middle of nowhere and



trains in a spartan environment by using the most archaic devices and techniques. In contrast, Drago trains in a lavish setting with all of the modern day bells and whistles. If you watch the movie closely, you will see Rocky never spars in training! While his general conditioning improves greatly,

anyone that has been around pugilism for any amount of time will tell you there is no substitute for bone on bone sparring! How did Rocky do it? **Psychological preparation.**

While this account is fictional, I am excited to share a real life account of psychological preparation that helped one man go from the outhouse to the penthouse in one life changing chess match.

In the 1920's, perennial chess world champion, Capablanca, was undefeated and many experts of the game of chess felt Capablanca would never be defeated. Alekhine did not believe that, but no one besides Alekhine felt he had a serious chance of beating Capablanca in the 1927 world champions. While Capablanca enjoyed the good life of a champion, Alekhine retired to the country. In this rural environment, he quit smoking, quit drinking and did calisthenics much like a prizefighter preparing for fisticuffs! For the three months he trained in the country, he did not play chess. Instead, he only rehearsed in his mind the image of defeating Capablanca in every possible situation he

might encounter. After seeing himself defeating Capablanca, he would imagine himself as the victorious world champion. In the upset of the twentieth century, Alekhine defeated Capablanca! Alekhine saw himself like a world champion and acted like one long before anyone else believed in him.

If you are involved with a very physical sport, obviously, you must train hard - physically. No one denies this. However, if you do not employ some sort of mental imagery training, you are not living up to your full potential. Physical Training plus Mental Imagery Training equals Synergy!

If you are a running back and want to rush for a 1,000 yards next season, see yourself doing it now! Want to deadlift a 50 lb. PR, see you self doing it now! Create a vision and take action.