



# Power Training. Powerful Results! **PEAKS COACHING GROUP**

**Name of Article:** Making Allies With Your Mind

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## *Trust Your Training & Believe in Yourself to Succeed*

Today as athletes, with all the technical training we can receive, all the nutritional information, and all the equipment upgrades it's easy to over think your situation at any given time. The mental aspect of sport is as important as any other aspect and we cannot forget this. I have known racers in years past that went into an off-season with the best of intentions, hired a coach, ate right, rested and followed their program to a tee. But when the season started they could not comprehend the mental capacity it takes to pull this together as a whole. So, by not trusting themselves, they had huge letdowns at events.

How do you overcome this and get back on track? You have to live in the now. If you cannot do this then you will never snap back. If you live in the past, (i.e. what happened at the last race), then you cannot move on to the next event with a clear mind and conscience. Yes, when you put as much effort into a sport, the way many of us do, you better have a conscience. This is what keeps you honest with your training. Racing is like your tires, you invest in them, trust them at high speeds, leaning over 30 degrees in a turn, bombing downhill's at 50mph on these skinny little pieces of rubber. The bottom line is, you trust them and you have to trust yourself, your abilities, your coach, your training, your diet and everything else you put into this sport just like you trust those tires. If you cannot trust all that you have done to prepare then you need to find another activity.

To be mentally strong is, I think, in all of us. It's there, you just have to hone that like any other skill. We all know that Lance did not beat cancer because he had a negative attitude. Your mental state at any given event is your strongest ally. How many times have you finished an event and said to yourself "if I just didn't give up on that climb I could've stayed with the pack"? Scenario's like this are common amongst all of us. But like all of the other aspects of this sport that we rely on to get us to the podium we have to rely on our brains to keep us in the fight. Forget about the last one and move onto the next. We have all been successful in life, not by accident, it happened because of hard work and a strong mental attitude. Carry this through to your passion of cycling.

I have one good example that my mental state as an athlete helped me. I have a friend that lives in Belgium, and I went to France this past summer to see him and ride in the Alpe's. One of the rides we did was of course L' Alpe Du' Huez. When I started this climb I kept looking up the mountain-side thinking, "how am I going to make it up to the next switchback?" But then, all of a sudden, I was there. And I would look up again and wonder the same thing. Then sure enough I made it to there. After this happened three time, I decided that I could do it and with each of the 19 of 22 switchbacks remaining, I went faster and faster as I climbed. I managed to do the climb in 55 and 1/2 minutes, which I was proud of being from the States, not to mention the flat lands

of Florida. The point is once my mind was at ease and I trusted my abilities and training, I settled down, relaxed, and ended up going faster than I could have if I kept looking up the mountain in doubt. The mental ability that makes you successful with your jobs, relationships, raising your children is no different than the state of mind you should have with a race. Remember don't get wrapped around the axle with "my heart rate was off" or "my power was down", these are all tools to help us get there but you already have one of the most powerful tools and that's your mind. Use it.

*Geoff Lanier is a USAC certified coach, a Cat 2 road racer, successful ex-triathlete and all around training enthusiast. Geoff currently races on the road for Best of the Bay Cyclists in Tampa, Florida and is an associate coach at the Peaks Coaching Group.*

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