

Player's Page

Eliminate Your Fear of Mistakes – Just Be 1 Run Better

By: Cindy Bristow

Worrying about making mistakes is normal, but not helpful. Learn 4 things you can do to switch your thinking and start playing better softball!



Players that spend too much time trying not to make mistakes are really just hurting themselves by not being as fast or as strong or as good as they can be. Free yourself up from this mistakes-thinking by simply being 1 Run Better than Them!

It's really common for players to be really worried about making mistakes during games or practices. In fact, this is probably THE most common thing players worry about. So, if that sounds like you then you're perfectly normal. But, it's also a very limiting way to think since your brain thinks in pictures so telling it NOT to think of something like mistakes really only leaves it with a picture of mistakes. Not what you had in mind.

Luckily, there is something that we can do to help us all relax more when we're playing instead of being so nervous and tense all the time. Being relaxed doesn't mean you aren't trying or you're trying your guts out. It simply means that you aren't stiff and tense and worried all the time.

So let's start with this statement or any player or team that wins a game makes mistakes. The best of the best make mistakes every game. Pitchers miss their targets, throws get thrown away, balls get bobbled, and players strike out. Errors happen every game, and it happens to the very best of players. Last year Alabama won the Women's College World Series beating Oklahoma in a best of 3 game series. In that final game to determine the National Champion, the 2 best pitchers in college softball weren't perfect. In fact, both teams ended up with 1 error each. The winning pitcher for Alabama, Jackie Traina gave up 3 walks and 3 home runs, while Oklahoma's pitcher Keilani Ricketts had 2 walks and a wild pitch.

It's NOT about being perfect, **it's simply about being 1 Run Better Than Your Opponent!** That's all! You don't have to play pretty, you don't have to play flawlessly, you simply have to adjust from your mistakes and end up 1 Run Better than Your Opponents!

To help yourself overcome the obsession with perfection, try the following:

- **Play against the Clock:** practice doing skills faster and stay focused on doing the skill.
- **Play Against your Teammates:** practice doing a certain skill faster than your teammates, either individually or in pairs or teams.
- **Think in the Now, Get Out of the Past:** instead of carrying around all the bad plays you've made so far today, throw all of your thinking into the MAIN THING you must do to make THIS play good! Stay in the now and get out of the past!
- **Support the Rebound:** I'm not talking basketball rebounds. What I mean here is that we all make mistakes so the next time one of your teammates bobbles a ball or blows it somehow, help them quickly rebound and get into the now! That's why we play team sports so we can help others and let them help us! So be a rebounding teammate, and let your teammates help you rebound as well!