

GOLDMIND Excellence

Believe in Yourself and Your Abilities

Gold Through Belief



Probably the biggest problem I have found facing most young athletes is a lack of real belief in their own ability. I'm not talking about external confidence (which is simply a brave face put on for other competitors!). I mean real inner belief that you truly

KNOW that you can win, or perform in the manner you desire. This lack of real belief in yourself creates a mental approach of fear, which can cause you a variety of problems before competition. The most common ones are listed in the box to the side.

Common Pre-Competition Problems

- A deep inner feeling of not being good enough
- Extreme nervousness
- Negative thoughts of all types
- Low energy
- Worrying about small details which may never occur
- Intimidation from other athletes
- Unusual or silly mistakes during the competition
- Recurring problems
- Not looking forward to competition
- Jealousy of other athletes.

How many of these describe you before a competition?

ONCE ATHLETES GRADUALLY BEGIN TO BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES...

... the symptoms in the box often disappear completely or reduce substantially, allowing positive feelings of confidence, anticipation and even a general feeling of happiness to fill your mind and body before a competition. This is a far better preparation for a strong performance.

Don't get me wrong. Nervousness before a race or game is not a bad thing! It's a sign that you are psyched up and ready to go. (So don't

get concerned if you're nervous!!) It's only extreme nervousness that most athletes can do without before they perform. So what is the best way to begin to create belief in yourself and your own ability?

DEVELOPING BELIEF THROUGH VISUALIZATION

Daily visualization. Every day for 5 minutes (or even if just for a few minutes) vividly imagine in your mind the absolute perfect performance you wish to do at your next competition, as if it is really happening right at that very moment. This literally reprograms your subconscious mind for success (much like a computer). Visualization, or imagery, is a form of self-hypnosis which is very safe, easy and it works brilliantly.

USING ALL YOUR SENSES

For example, if you are a swimmer, when you visualize a race in your mind, use all your senses - imagine **seeing** the swimmers, pool and surroundings in their respective colors, **smell** the chlorine of the pool, **hear** the sounds of people cheering you, and most of all, **feel** the joy of swimming to the best of your ability or when you win a race or swim that time you desired and trained so much for.

IT ONLY TAKES 5 MINUTES A DAY

If you do this every day for about 5 minutes, you will gradually notice a shift in your confidence levels before competition, and your performances will begin to steadily improve. I don't have the space to tell you how this works, except to say that this programmes the area of your mind that is the control-center of all of your body's movements. In other words, doing imagery is like putting a program into your own personal computer.

WILL YOU MAKE THE COMMITMENT?

How good do you really want to be? It's only the truly dedicated athletes who will do this every day. It very quickly sorts out the serious athletes from the ones who just wish they were better, but are not willing to do anything about it. Are you willing to try this for 5 minutes a day? Try it, you'll discover a whole range of extra benefits from it as well.

Changing Pre-Competition Problems

Select a pre-competition problem that affects you. Now turn it around. In other words, how would you like to handle the situation in future competitions? How would a champion in your sport handle the situation?

Every day, imagine yourself performing or behaving in this way. For example, before a swim race, rather than being so nervous that you feel almost sick, visualize yourself looking calm as you proceed to the marshaling area. Feel the 'good nervous' emotions, feel yourself walking with confidence. Feel the excitement and power in your body as you stand behind the starting block.

Use your powerful imagination to see yourself performing just the way you want it to happen on race day. Avoid worrying about things. Unfortunately worry is also using your imagination, but for the worse. Use your imagery to program into your brain the exact way you want to swim your race, or for something to happen.

To have an excellent performance you must plan and prepare for an excellent performance!

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