**Gathering Information and Approaches to Develop Mental, Emotional and Social Factors Impacting on Performance.**

**National 4/5 and Higher**

**Falkirk Council Inset Day – Thursday 13th February 2014**

**With Thanks to**

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| --- | --- |
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| **Helen Stout** | **Bo’ness Academy** |
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| **Brian Townsend** | **Larbert High School** |
| **Helen Black** | **Larbert High School** |
| **Mark Swan** | **St Mungo’s High School** |
| **Alan Thomson** | **St Mungo’s High School** |

**MENTAL**

**Mental - Anxiety Management Techniques: Cognitive & Somatic**

There are two different types of Anxiety management techniques. These are Cognitive and Somatic Anxiety management. Cognitive is the thought process of preventing anxiety, and is the mental element of the anxiety management. Somatic is the physical element of anxiety management and an element that allows athletes to show their anxiety through actions within their sport.

**Cognitive anxiety management techniques:**

**Imagery**

The first cognitive anxiety management technique is imagery. Imagery is where an athlete will imagine themselves in a calm situation where they are in control away from the anxious situation. This can also take the form of mental rehearsal, kin-aesthetic imagery and creative imagery are also effective. Imagery can be used to help relaxation and focus.

It can take two forms: External imagery and Internal imagery.

External imagery is when the athlete can picture themselves performing the task successfully. For example a tennis player could picture an ace serve and where the ball will land before serving to focus them. However, the athletes must be a skilled and experienced performer if the picture is to be of value.

Internal imagery is the mental rehearsal of skills and techniques and instead focuses on specific elements of the skill without picturing the whole scene. For example, a full-swing in golf can be rehearsed continuously without envisaging other players around due to fact that golf is also mainly a solitary sport. Mental rehearsal is productive because it is thought to stimulate the nervous system and the muscles in a way that replicates the real situation.  A sporting example of this cognitive anxiety management technique would be British Long distance runner, Mohammed Farah who practices his technique continuously before, during and after any event for example, he will even practice his breathing techniques routinely to enable him take in as much air as possible when running.

**Thought Stopping**

Though stopping requires an athlete to refuse to think negatively. Any negative inclination should and must be stopped and substituted with a positive thought. Thought stopping may be more effective if a person is inclined to be both confident and extroverted. Individuals with introverted tendencies and those prone to learn helplessness may find trying to channel these negative thoughts difficult. An athlete will use this though stopping process before a match or an event of high importance, an example is professional rugby league club Leeds Rhino’s players will have to try to channel out any negative thoughts when they go up against any other high profile and talented team such as rivals Bradford Bulls. Leeds Rhino’s coach Brian McDermott ensure that this thought process is broken down to ensure the best possible outcome for his team.

**Positive Self-talk**

Positive self-talk involves the athlete endorsing their own ability or progress by literally talking to him or herself. This is often common in tennis because if they play a bad shot or loose the point they will positive self talk to help them win the next point. This is often common in British tennis player, Andy Murray as you can see him muttering to himself after a lost point or a ineffective shot, of course many players across the sporting world do this as well and for some players you can see the negativity of the self-chatter. This involves the athlete being able to take into account where they are up to with their ability, and being able to progress by talking to themselves to help figure out where to go next. Speaking aloud will commit you (the athlete) to the task and is effective in raising confidence. However, positive self-talk is only of value if performers are of a high standard and are experienced.

**Rational Thinking**

Rational thinking is thought that anxiety grows from an imbalance of perception between ability and situational demands. Rational thinking involves focusing inwardly on the internal and narrow style of attention and evaluating the situation and it possible logical consequences. (Martens, 1975). Rational thinking works effectively if the athlete has the experience and skill to evaluate a situation realistically. The Inexperienced athlete would be unable to make a rational evaluation. An example of rational thinking is when Manchester City were losing 3-0 at home to Sunderland in March 2011/2012 season, but went on to rescue a point an earn a 3-3 draw. This is a prime example of rational thinking because Manchester City were 3-0 and through rational thinking it helped them to focus on the game and attempt to rescue a result which they very well did as they ended up drawing level at full-time.

**Somatic anxiety management techniques:**

**Biofeedback**

This technique involves the measurement of physical changes that happen to the body when arousal and anxiety increase. Accurate measurements of changes in heart rate, blood pressure and skin temperature can be taken once it is known that a performer is becoming anxious. Once these changes are being monitored, It is thought that the performer can control the physiological effects of excessive anxiety, such as muscular tension and adopt a calmer state.  A psychologist named Petruzello discovered that there is strong evidence that biofeedback is effective in improving performance.

**Progressive Muscular Relaxation**

Progressive muscular relaxation which is also known as (PMR) is a technique that was devised by Jacobson in 1929. requires the athlete to increase the tension of the muscles throughout the body and gradually relax each group in turn. Many studies have proved that PMR helps relaxation, however (Cox, 1998) believes that PMR is only successful when used alongside other relaxation techniques. A major disadvantage to this technique is that it is very time consuming and can take between 30 and 45 minutes to complete.

**Competitive Anxiety**

Competition can cause athletes to react both physically (somatic) and mentally (cognitive) in a manner which can negatively affect their performance abilities. Stress, arousal and anxiety are terms used to describe this condition.

The major problem in competition is letting your mind work against you rather than for you. You must accept anxiety symptoms as part and parcel of the competition experience; only then will anxiety begin to facilitate your performance. Gallwey (2000)[[8]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) explains the elements of interference that impact on performance.

* Performance = Potential - Interference.

### Anxiety - Performance Relationship Theory

#### Drive Theory

According to the Drive Theory (Zajonc 1965)[[7]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) if an athlete is appropriately skilled then it will help them to perform well if their drive to compete is aroused - they are "psyched up".

#### 

#### Inverted-U hypothesis

An alternative approach to Drive Theory is known as the Inverted-U hypothesis (Yerkes 1908)[[2]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) that predicts a relationship between arousal and performance approximates to an inverted U shape. The theory is that as arousal is increased then performance improves but only up to a certain point (top of the inverted U). If the athlete's arousal is increased beyond this point then performance diminishes.

#### Multi-dimensional Anxiety Theory

Multi-dimensional Anxiety Theory (Martens 1990)[[3]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) is based on the distinction between cognitive anxiety and somatic anxiety. The theory makes a series of predictions:

* There will be a negative but linear relationship between cognitive anxiety and performance
* There will be an inverted U relationship between somatic anxiety and performance
* Somatic anxiety should decline once performance begins but cognitive anxiety may remain high if [confidence](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/selfcon.htm) is low

#### Catastrophe Theory

Catastrophe Theory (Hardy 1987)[[6]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) suggests that:

* stress and anxiety will influence performance
* each athlete will respond in a unique way to competitive anxiety
* performance will be effected in a unique way which may be difficult to predict using general rules

#### Optimum Arousal Theory

According to the Optimum Arousal Theory (Hanin 1997)[[4]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) each athlete will perform at their best if their level of arousal or competitive anxiety falls within their optimum functioning zone. The challenge for the coach is to determine the athlete's zone and identify the techniques that will place the athlete in this zone prior to competition.

### How do you measure Anxiety?

A range of psychometric tests or sport anxiety questionnaires (SAQ) have been used by sports psychologists to understand and measure this condition. Spielberger (1966)[[5]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) argued that it was necessary to make a distinction between momentary states and more permanent traits.

* Anxiety states (A-state) is our response to a particular situation (i.e. sky diving)
* Anxiety traits (A-trait) are the characteristics of our personality, our general anxiety level

Marten (1990)[[3]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) developed anxiety traits (A-trait) questionnaires that were tailored specially to sport known as the Sport Competition Anxiety Test ([SCAT](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/scat.htm)). Marten (1990)[[3]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref) recognised that any measure of sport anxiety must take into consideration cognitive anxiety (negative thoughts, worry) and somatic anxiety (physiological response). The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory or CSAI-2 takes into account the difference between A-state and A-trait and distinguishes between cognitive and somatic anxiety.

**Symptoms of Anxiety**

Anxiety can be recognised on three levels (Karageorghis 2007)[[1]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref):

* Cognitive - by particular thought process
* Somatic - by physical response
* Behavioural - by patterns of behaviour

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Cognitive | Somatic | Behavioural |
| Indecision Sense of confusion Feeling heavy Negative thoughts Poor concentration Irritability Fear Forgetfulness  Loss of confidence Images of failure Defeatist self-talk Feeling rushed Feeling weak Constant dissatisfaction Unable to take instructions Thoughts of avoidance | Increased blood pressure Pounding heart Increased respiration rate Sweating Clammy hands and feet Butterflies in the stomach Adrenaline surge Dry mouth Need to urinate Muscular tension Tightness in neck and shoulders Trembling Incessant talking Blushing Pacing up and down Distorted vision Twitching Yawning Voice distortion Nausea Vomiting Diarrhoea Loss of appetite Sleeplessness Loss of libido | Biting fingernails Lethargic movements Inhibited posture Playing safe Going through the motions Introversion Uncharacteristic displays of extroversion Fidgeting  Avoidance of eye contact  Covering face with hand |

**How can we control anxiety?**

As we can see anxiety includes state and trait dimensions both of which can show themselves as cognitive and somatic symptoms. An athlete with high anxiety trait (A-trait) is likely to be more anxious in stressful situations. To help the athlete control competitive anxiety somatic techniques ([relaxation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relax.htm)) and cognitive techniques ([mental imagery](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/imagery.htm)) can be used.

#### The five breath technique

This exercise can be performed while you are standing up, lying down or sitting upright. You should inhale slowly, deeply and evenly through your nose, and exhale gently through your mouth as though flickering, but not extinguishing, the flame of a candle (Karageorghis 2007)[[1]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref):

* Take a deep breath and allow your face and neck to relax as you breathe out
* Take a second deep breath and allow your shoulders and arms to relax as you breathe out
* Take a third deep breath and allow your chest, stomach and back to relax as you breathe out
* Take a fourth deep breath and allow your legs and feet to relax as you breathe out
* Take a fifth deep breath and allow your whole body to relax as you breathe out
* Continue to breathe deeply for as long as you need to, and each time you breathe out say the word 'relax' in your mind's ear

#### Benson's relaxation response

Benson's technique is a form of [meditation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm#meditation) that can be used to attain quite a deep sense of [relaxation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm) and can be ideal for staying calm in between rounds of a competition. It can be mastered with just a few weeks' practice and comprises of seven easy steps (Karageorghis 2007)[[1]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref):

1. Sit in a comfortable position and adopt a relaxed posture
2. Pick a short focus word that has significant meaning for you and that you associate with relaxation (e.g. relax, smooth, calm, easy, float, etc.)
3. Slowly close your eyes
4. Relax all the muscles in your body
5. Breathe smoothly and naturally, repeating the focus word
6. Be passive so that if other thoughts enter your mind, dismiss them with, 'Oh well' and calmly return to the focus word - do not concern yourself with how the process is going
7. Continue this for 10 to 15 minutes as required.

**Developing Performance**

**Mental Anxiety Task**

#### To improve anxiety the following task can be performed

**Read the information below and complete the questions**

**Choose an activity** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Give an example of a situation where you were anxious when performance** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Write down how this affected your performance**

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**Try the following approach directly before a performance to improve your anxiety**

#### The five breath technique

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* Take a fifth deep breath and allow your whole body to relax as you breathe out
* Continue to breathe deeply for as long as you need to, and each time you breathe out say the word 'relax' in your mind's ear

**Explain how your performance changed as a result of carrying out this technique**

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Write down how this affected your performance

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Try the following approach directly before a performance to improve your anxiety**

**Benson’s relaxation response**

Benson's technique is a form of [meditation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm#meditation) that can be used to attain quite a deep sense of [relaxation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm) and can be ideal for staying calm in between rounds of a competition. It can be mastered with just a few weeks' practice and comprises of seven easy steps (Karageorghis 2007)[[1]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm" \l "ref):

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5. Breathe smoothly and naturally, repeating the focus word
6. Be passive so that if other thoughts enter your mind, dismiss them with, 'Oh well' and calmly return to the focus word - do not concern yourself with how the process is going
7. Continue this for 10 to 15 minutes as required.

**Explain how your performance changed as a result of carrying out this technique**

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**Developing Performance**

**Mental Anxiety Task (Scenario)**

**Read the information below and complete the questions**

**Activity** - badminton

**Read the following scenario**

Imagine you are competing in a national competition. You have just won your semi-final and in a short time you will take part in the final against an opponent you have never beaten.

Write down on a scale from 1-10 how anxious you think you will be feeling

1. Not anxious 10 – very anxious

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you have selected this number

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Explain how your level of anxiety will affect your performance

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**In the time leading up to the final you will have used the following technique to improve your anxiety the following technique to improve your anxiety**

**Benson’s relaxation response**

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3. Slowly close your eyes
4. Relax all the muscles in your body
5. Breathe smoothly and naturally, repeating the focus word
6. Be passive so that if other thoughts enter your mind, dismiss them with, 'Oh well' and calmly return to the focus word - do not concern yourself with how the process is going
7. Continue this for 10 to 15 minutes as required.

**After using the technique your level of anxiety should have improved**

Write down on a scale from 1-10 how anxious you were feeling just before the performance

1. Not anxious 10 – very anxious

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you have selected this number

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How did having improved anxiety affect your performance

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**Mental Imagery/Visualisation**

Mental imagery, or visualisation, involves the athlete imagining themselves in an environment performing a specific activity using all of their senses (sight, hear, feel and smell). The images should have the athlete performing successfully and feeling satisfied with their performance.

Visualisation is proving to be an understandably popular mechanism with elite athletes eager for marginal gains. The use of imagery primes their muscles to perform correct technique and to execute appropriate actions in competition, but it also conditions their mind to think clearly about how they will react to certain pressures, situations and problems. Consider it a ‘mental warm-up.’

When combined with [relaxation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm) it is useful in:

* the promotion of rest, recovery and recuperation
* the removal of stress related reactions e.g. muscular tension
* establishing a physical and mental state which has an increased receptivity to positive mental imagery
* establishing an appropriate level of physical and mental arousal prior to competition

**What are the benefits of Mental Imagery/Visualisation?**

Mental Imagery can be used to:

* **Familiarise** the athlete with a competition site, a race course, a complex play pattern or routine etc.
* **Motivate** the athlete by recalling images of their goals for that session, or of success in a past competition or beating a competitor in competition
* **Perfect skills** or skill sequences the athlete is learning or refining
* **Reduce negative thoughts and develop confidence** by focusing on positive outcomes
* **Refocus** the athlete when the need arises e.g. if performance is feeling sluggish, [imagery](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/imagery.htm) of a previous best performance or previous best event focus can help get things back on track
* **See success** where the athlete sees themselves performing skills correctly and the desired outcomes
* **Set the stage for performance** with a complete mental run through of the key elements of their performance to set the athlete's desired pre-competition
* feelings and focus to cope with new strategies and situations



**How do I apply mental imagery?**

* This method is used regularly by many of the world’s best tennis players who are currently competing at the Australian Open. Defending champion Novak Djokovic and 2013 Wimbledon champion Andy Murray both use imagery to prepare for games. Djokovic was taught to visualise his shots to the accompaniment of classical music by his first coach.
* Murray has even been known to [**make several visits to a deserted Centre Court**](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2012/jun/24/wimbledon-2012-andy-murray-centre-court) in advance of Wimbledon in order to mentally acclimatise to the environment. “I have sat on Centre Court with no one there and thought a bit about the court, the matches I have played there,” Murray said. “I want to make sure I feel as good as possible so I have a good tournament.”

**When should mental imagery be used?**

* To become proficient in the use of imagery you have to use it ever day: on your way to training, during training and after training. In every training session, before you execute any skill or combination of skills, first do it in imagery. See, feel, and experience yourself moving through the actions in your mind, as you would like them actually to unfold. In the competition situation use imagery before the start of the event and see yourself performing successfully/winning.

**Suggested Techniques to Use.**

**1 The "Quick Set" routine**

Psychologist Jeff Simons developed a routine that would allow an athlete to achieve an appropriate mental arousal in the last 30 seconds before a competition. The "Quick Set" routine, which involves physical, emotional and focus cues, can also be used as a means of refocusing quickly following a distraction.

An example of this "Quick set" routine for a sprinter could be:

* Close your eyes, clear your mind and maintain deep rhythmical breathing, in through your nose and out through your mouth (physical cue)
* Imagine a previous race win, see yourself crossing the line in first place and recreate those emotional feelings of success (emotional cue)
* Return your focus to the sprint start, think of blasting off on the 'B' of the bang with the appropriate limb action (focus cue) but from the vantage point of someone standing on the finishing line, and commentate on the race as it develops. Watch as you get closer.... stand there as the image gets bigger.... comment on the sweat and how that runner is breathing... keep looking as the image gets so big you can look right into her eye.

**2 Visualisation Script**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| VISUALISATION SCRIPT | ACTION |
| Remove Pre Competition Nerves  Close your eyes and take a deep breath  Picture a day when you were going to a competition |  |
| Prepare for the Action |  |
| Achieve a Successful Outcome |  |
|  |  |

**\*\*\*\*Use this website for ideas to complete the script above**

<http://key-hypnosis.com/Self-Help/Visualization-Techniques/LV7-Sports-Visualisation-Script.php>

**Mental - Relaxation**

Relaxation itself can be useful in a number of circumstances including:

* the promotion of rest, recovery and recuperation
* the removal of stress related reactions, e.g. increased muscular tension, etc.
* the establishing of a physical and mental state which has an increased receptivity to positive mental imagery
* the establishing of a set level of physical and mental arousal prior to warming up for competition

### Mental Imagery

When combined with positive [mental imagery](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/mental.htm) it is useful in:

* developing [self confidence](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/selfcon.htm)
* developing pre-competition and competition strategies which teach athletes to cope with new situations before they actually encounter them
* helping the athlete to focus his/her attention or concentrate on a particular skill he/she is trying to learn or develop. This can take place both in or away from the training session
* the competition situation

### How do I achieve relaxed muscles?

Progressive muscular relaxation involves the active contracting and relaxing of muscles. When a muscle is tightened for 4-6 seconds and then relaxed, the muscle returns to a more relaxed state. This process should be performed for the following parts of the body in turn - feet, legs, thighs, buttocks, stomach, back, neck, shoulders, arms, hands, jaw, face and eyes.

### How will relaxed muscles feel?

J.H. Schultz in the 1930's (Schultz & Luthe 1959)[[1]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref) noticed that patients in a relaxed state experienced one of two sensations: the feeling of warmth or the feeling of heaviness in completely relaxed limbs . During the relaxation process, concentration should be focused on one of these sensations. For the first few sessions, the athlete should alternate the focus between sessions to determine which one they prefer.

### Can Relaxation have a Negative Effect?

In a competition situation an athlete will either be:

* **Under excited**; low in arousal; find it hard to "get up" for the competition; disinterested; etc.
* **Over excited**; high in arousal; over the top; nervous-anxious; scared of the competition; sick with worry; etc.
* **Optimally excited**; nervous but in control; looking forward to the competition but apprehensive; thinking positively; feeling good; etc.

If we were to use [relaxation procedures](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relax.htm) with an over excited athlete, we might be able to reduce his/her arousal level to that of the optimally excited athlete. This would have a positive effect on his/her performance. However if we asked an under-excited athlete to use relaxation procedures it would only make it harder for him/her to "get-up" for the competition. The coach therefore has to know his/her athletes and how they react in competitive situations.

### Relaxation Training

There are a number of [relaxation techniques](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relax.htm) that have the following characteristics:

* procedures for first recognising and then releasing tension in muscles
* concentration on breathing control and regulation
* concentration on sensations such as heaviness, warmth
* mental imagery

Regardless of which technique is used, the following two conditions need to exist if the technique is to be learned:

* the athlete must believe that relaxation will help
* a quiet, dimly lit and warm room which is free from interruption

### Centering

The Centering technique was developed by the Tibetan Monks over 2000 years ago. Centering requires you to focus your attention on the centre of your body, the area just behind your naval button. The technique has a calming and controlling effect, providing an effective way to manage anxiety.

* Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, arms hanging loosely by your side
* Close your eyes and breath evenly - try to keep the tension in the upper body to a minimum as you breath
* Inhale deeply from your abdomen (your stomach will extend) and be aware of the tension in your face, neck, shoulders and chest. As you exhale let the tension fall away and focus on the feeling of heaviness in your stomach
* Continue to breath evenly and deeply and focus your attention on the centre of your body, the area just behind your naval button
* Maintain your attention on that spot and continue to breath evenly and deeply, feeling controlled, heavy and calm
* As you breath out think of a word that encapsulates the physical feeling and mental focus you want e.g. "relax", "calm"

### Self Hypnosis

This is one of the most popular self-hypnosis techniques employed by athletes. It aims to help you distance your mind from the here and now and place you in a setting that you associate with relaxation and inner calm. This script could be recorded as an MP3 file - where there are 3 full stops (...) leave a pause for a few seconds and remember to speak clearly and slowly. The following script (Karageorghis 2006)[[3]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref) is an adaptation of a script published by the London College of Clinical Hypnosis.

Firstly you need to relax, put on some very relaxing music or sounds of nature, sit or lie down in a position that you find comfortable in a place where you are unlikely to be disturbed.

Look up at your eyebrows and begin to concentrate on the sounds around you... maybe the distant sound of a car driving by or the hustle and bustle outside on the street... then concentrate on the sounds of the music, feel it flowing over you as if it were the tide going in and out, in and out... now begin to pay attention to the sound of your thoughts... concentrate on your breathing. Take deep breaths in and out... in and out... listen to your heart beat... become aware of your eyelids and feel them blinking quickly and notice that you have a strong desire to close your eyes... allow your eyes to close and feel a deep sensation of relaxation. In a few seconds, you will imagine your favourite place of relaxation... maybe somewhere you have been before, a beautiful garden, a deserted beach, a summer meadow or somewhere you can imagine you would feel relaxed... and now... just imagine that you are standing on a balcony... and there is a long set of stairs in front of you... leading down from this balcony... there are strong stairs... with wide steps... and a handrail on each side... the stairs are well lit... and you can see them clearly... In a few seconds' time... you can count down from 10 to one... and with each descending number between 10 and one... you will take a single step down the stairs... and with each descending number you will become more and more calm, more and more relaxed... each step down from the balcony will take you deeper and deeper... into your wonderful state of relaxation... and as you slowly descend these stairs... you are going to experience a sense of ever-deepening relaxation... throughout your entire body... You will feel the stairs under your feet and when you eventually reach step one, you can pause and wonder where you might go next... again you feel very tranquil and this tranquility is accompanied by a sense of anticipation... you will then step off... and when you do so... you will find yourself in your favourite place of relaxation... and enjoy... this beautiful place... Provide yourself with only positive and beneficial suggestions. For example, relating to increasing your [self-confidence](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/selfcon.htm), attaining peak performance in an upcoming competition, or mastering a specific sports skill that has perhaps proved elusive to you. If, at any time, for any reason, for example in case of emergency or any situation where full attention is required, by opening your eyes, you will be fully alert.

To take yourself out of your relaxing place in a gradual manner, simply count up slowly from one to ten, on reaching the number eight, open your eyes, and at the number 10 you will be fully awake and alert. As you stand up, have a stretch and notice how good you feel.

### Meditation for Relaxation

A number of people involved in sports psychology believe that meditation can be useful in getting maximum performance from an athlete (Syer & Connolly, 1984)[[2]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref). Engaging in meditation helps reduce stress before an event and with experience the athlete can learn to relax different muscle groups and appreciate subtle differences in muscle tension. The technique includes the following steps:

* Lie down on your back in a comfortable position and close your eyes
* Relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing to your face
* Breathe through your nose and become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word "won" silently to yourself. For example, breathe in . . . out, "won"; in . . . out, "won"; and so on. Continue for 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, lie quietly for several minutes at first with closed eyes and later with opened eyes.

Maintain a passive attitude, permit relaxation to occur at its own pace and expect other thoughts. When distracting thoughts occur, return your concentration to your breathing. Try to practice a [relaxation technique](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relax.htm) once a day.

**Developing Performance**

**Mental Relaxation Task**

#### To improve relaxation the following task can be performed

**Read the information below and complete the questions**

**Choose an activity** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Give an example of a situation when you were not feeling relaxed during a performance** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Write down how this affected your performance**

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**Try the following approach directly before a performance to improve your relaxation**

### Centering

### The Centering technique was developed by the Tibetan Monks over 2000 years ago. Centering requires you to focus your attention on the centre of your body, the area just behind your naval button. The technique has a calming and controlling effect, providing an effective way to manage anxiety.

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* Maintain your attention on that spot and continue to breath evenly and deeply, feeling controlled, heavy and calm
* As you breath out think of a word that encapsulates the physical feeling and mental focus you want e.g. "relax", "calm"

**Explain how your performance changed as a result of carrying out this technique**

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**Write down how this affected your performance**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Explain how your performance changed as a result of carrying out this technique**

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**Developing Performance**

**Mental Relaxation Task**

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**Write down how this affected your performance**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Try the following approach directly before a performance to improve your relaxation**

### Meditation for Relaxation

A number of people involved in sports psychology believe that meditation can be useful in getting maximum performance from an athlete (Syer & Connolly, 1984)[[2]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref). Engaging in meditation helps reduce stress before an event and with experience the athlete can learn to relax different muscle groups and appreciate subtle differences in muscle tension. The technique includes the following steps:

* Lie down on your back in a comfortable position and close your eyes
* Relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing to your face
* Breathe through your nose and become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word "won" silently to yourself. For example, breathe in . . . out, "won"; in . . . out, "won"; and so on. Continue for 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, lie quietly for several minutes at first with closed eyes and later with opened eyes.

Maintain a passive attitude, permit relaxation to occur at its own pace and expect other thoughts. When distracting thoughts occur, return your concentration to your breathing. Try to practice a [relaxation technique](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relax.htm) once a day.

**Explain how your performance changed as a result of carrying out this technique**

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**Developing Performance**

**Mental Relaxation Task (Scenario)**

**Read the information below and complete the questions**

**Activity** - badminton

**Read the following scenario**

Imagine you are competing in a national competition. You have just won your semi-final and in a short time you will take part in the final against an opponent you have never beaten.

Write down on a scale from 1-10 how relaxed you think you will be feeling

1. Not relaxed 10 – very relaxed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you have selected this number

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Explain how your level of relaxation will affect your performance

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**In the time leading up to the final you will have used one of the following techniques to improve your relaxation**

### Centering

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* Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, arms hanging loosely by your side
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* Inhale deeply from your abdomen (your stomach will extend) and be aware of the tension in your face, neck, shoulders and chest. As you exhale let the tension fall away and focus on the feeling of heaviness in your stomach
* Continue to breath evenly and deeply and focus your attention on the centre of your body, the area just behind your naval button
* Maintain your attention on that spot and continue to breath evenly and deeply, feeling controlled, heavy and calm
* As you breath out think of a word that encapsulates the physical feeling and mental focus you want e.g. "relax", "calm"

### Self Hypnosis

This is one of the most popular self-hypnosis techniques employed by athletes. It aims to help you distance your mind from the here and now and place you in a setting that you associate with relaxation and inner calm. This script could be recorded as an MP3 file - where there are 3 full stops (...) leave a pause for a few seconds and remember to speak clearly and slowly. The following script (Karageorghis 2006)[[3]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref) is an adaptation of a script published by the London College of Clinical Hypnosis.

Firstly you need to relax, put on some very relaxing music or sounds of nature, sit or lie down in a position that you find comfortable in a place where you are unlikely to be disturbed.

Look up at your eyebrows and begin to concentrate on the sounds around you... maybe the distant sound of a car driving by or the hustle and bustle outside on the street... then concentrate on the sounds of the music, feel it flowing over you as if it were the tide going in and out, in and out... now begin to pay attention to the sound of your thoughts... concentrate on your breathing. Take deep breaths in and out... in and out... listen to your heart beat... become aware of your eyelids and feel them blinking quickly and notice that you have a strong desire to close your eyes... allow your eyes to close and feel a deep sensation of relaxation. In a few seconds, you will imagine your favourite place of relaxation... maybe somewhere you have been before, a beautiful garden, a deserted beach, a summer meadow or somewhere you can imagine you would feel relaxed... and now... just imagine that you are standing on a balcony... and there is a long set of stairs in front of you... leading down from this balcony... there are strong stairs... with wide steps... and a handrail on each side... the stairs are well lit... and you can see them clearly... In a few seconds' time... you can count down from 10 to one... and with each descending number between 10 and one... you will take a single step down the stairs... and with each descending number you will become more and more calm, more and more relaxed... each step down from the balcony will take you deeper and deeper... into your wonderful state of relaxation... and as you slowly descend these stairs... you are going to experience a sense of ever-deepening relaxation... throughout your entire body... You will feel the stairs under your feet and when you eventually reach step one, you can pause and wonder where you might go next... again you feel very tranquil and this tranquility is accompanied by a sense of anticipation... you will then step off... and when you do so... you will find yourself in your favourite place of relaxation... and enjoy... this beautiful place... Provide yourself with only positive and beneficial suggestions. For example, relating to increasing your [self-confidence](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/selfcon.htm), attaining peak performance in an upcoming competition, or mastering a specific sports skill that has perhaps proved elusive to you. If, at any time, for any reason, for example in case of emergency or any situation where full attention is required, by opening your eyes, you will be fully alert.

To take yourself out of your relaxing place in a gradual manner, simply count up slowly from one to ten, on reaching the number eight, open your eyes, and at the number 10 you will be fully awake and alert. As you stand up, have a stretch and notice how good you feel.

### Meditation for Relaxation

A number of people involved in sports psychology believe that meditation can be useful in getting maximum performance from an athlete (Syer & Connolly, 1984)[[2]](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm" \l "ref). Engaging in meditation helps reduce stress before an event and with experience the athlete can learn to relax different muscle groups and appreciate subtle differences in muscle tension. The technique includes the following steps:

* Lie down on your back in a comfortable position and close your eyes
* Relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing to your face
* Breathe through your nose and become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word "won" silently to yourself. For example, breathe in . . . out, "won"; in . . . out, "won"; and so on. Continue for 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, lie quietly for several minutes at first with closed eyes and later with opened eyes.

**After using the technique your level of relaxation should have improved**

Write down on a scale from 1-10 how anxious you were feeling just before the performance

1. Not relaxation 10 – very relaxation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you have selected this number

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How did having improved anxiety affect your performance?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Mental - Relaxation**

**Getting Loose**

Begin each session as follows

* Loosen your clothing and remove your shoes
* Lie down with a pillow under your head (on a bed or on the floor)
* Lie flat on your back, feet about 12 to 18 inches apart and your arms at your sides
* Go as limp as you can from head to foot
* Let your shoulder blades go slightly flat
* Waggle your feet
* Settle in with your legs
* Shake your arms gently, rolling the backs of your hands against the floor
* Roll your head back and forth

Now begin the "Getting Loose" exercise for each part of your body, as follows

**Legs**

* + Flex the muscles of your left leg by raising it 6 to 10 inches above the floor Point your toes slightly back toward your head. Hold this position of tension for as long as you can, about 10 seconds or so, until you begin to feel the muscles start to tremble. Then, say to yourself 'Leg, let go'. At this point, stop flexing it and let the leg drop. Let the leg rest for another 10 seconds or so, saying to yourself 'I feel the tension flowing out of my leg...my leg feels relaxed, warm, heavy... completely relaxed'
  + Repeat the flex-let go-rest procedure for that leg.
  + Run through the entire procedure again for your right leg.

**Buttocks and thighs**

* + Tighten your buttock and thigh muscles, as tightly as you can. Hold them as long as you can - longer than 10 seconds - until you have to let go. Then release them, saying 'Let go', to yourself. Pause for 10 seconds or so and focus your attention on the relaxed feeling in those muscles, on the tension flowing out.
  + Repeat the exercise.

**Stomach**

* + Do the same procedure twice for your abdominal muscles

**Back and Neck**

* + Arch your spine, tightening all along it from your tailbone to your neck, and finish by telling it 'Let go'.
  + Repeat the exercise

**Arms and Shoulders**

* + Imagine there is a bar suspended above you that you want to use to pull yourself up. Raise your hands, palms upward, above your chest. Grab the imaginary bar and clench your fists around it as hard as you can. Flex the muscles in your arms and shoulders. Hunch your shoulders up as tightly as you can. Hold as long as possible and then say 'Let go. ' Rest for 10 seconds or so, soaking up the warm, relaxed feelings, letting the tension flow out.
  + Repeat the exercise

**Jaw**

* + I tighten your jaw muscles, clamping down on you back teeth. Say 'Let go' and relax.
  + Repeat the exercise.

**Face**

* + Tighten your facial muscles into a strong grimace. Say 'Let go'. Rest and focus on the relaxing feeling.
  + Repeat the exercise.

**Eyes**

* + Focus on a point on the ceiling. Without moving your head slowly roll your eyes to the right as far as they will go, then to the centre, then to the left, then back to the centre.
  + Rub the palms of your hands together until you feel heat. Close your eyes and cover them with your hands. Let the heat warm them. Rest, and tell your eyes 'Let go' and feel the tension flow out as you feel the warmth.

**Entire body**

* + Clench your feet and fists. Pull your shoulders up. Tighten your jaw and face. Now simultaneously flex your entire body, arching yourself as much as you can from your heels to the back of your head. Hold it for as long as you can until you feel your body tremble. Then say 'Let go' - and just let yourself go... all the way, as much as you can.
  + Lie there and feel the tension drain away.

**Get totally relaxed**

* + Close your eyes. Let your attention wander slowly over each part of your body, from legs to face, as you did in the exercise. If any area seems to have some residual tension, tense it. Let you. Feel the tension draining out of you, but do not worry if there is still a little left. Keeping your eyes closed, stay in this relaxed state for the rest of the 10 minute session. Think of a very pleasant, peaceful place. Think of floating in a small boat on a peaceful lake with a soft breeze gently rocking you back and forth, back and forth. Alternatively think of floating in space, lighter than air, weightless. Observe the pleasant, calm feelings. Tell yourself 'I am relaxed now... My legs feel relaxed... My buttocks, thighs, and abdomen feel relaxed... My back arms, shoulders, jaws, face and eyes feel relaxed... The tension has been let go. '

**Focus your relaxed feelings**

Now begin to focus this relaxation on your event. Tell yourself 'When I am running and I begin to feel tension gripping some muscles, I will be able to tell those muscles "Let go", saying "Let go" will recall the relaxed feelings I feel now and will release the tension from those muscles.'

**Breathing Easy**

Having completed the "Getting Loose" exercises remain lying on your back. Carry out the "Breathing Easy" exercise for 10 minutes, as follows

**Inhale**

* + Inhale slowly and deeply, filling your chest with air, counting four seconds to yourself 'One and two and three and four'. The count is to give you a nice and easy, even pace. Try to breathe as fully as you can without discomfort. Imagine your chest slowly filling with air, from your diaphragm to your collar.

**Hold breath**

* + When you have inhaled fully, hold your breath for another four seconds, again counting to yourself 'One and two and three and four'. This should be just a comfortable pause. Do not do it until you are blue in the face.

**Exhale**

* + Exhale - but do not blow. Just let the air out through your mouth slowly saying to yourself 'Easy...easy... easy... easy.' Let out as much air as you can, down to the lower part of the lungs. Feel yourself relaxing as you do. Feel your shoulders, chest and diaphragm letting go. As you exhale, think of the tension flowing out of you.

Do not worry if the sequence is not exact or the cadence perfect. It may seem a bit difficult to stay with at first, but just keep going. The important thing is to establish the slow relaxed breathing rate. After the ten cycles, your breathing rate will be automatically slower and you can dispense with the "one and two and three and four" cadence.

**Now do as follows:**

* Inhale - Breathe in fully.
* Hold breath - Hold it very briefly.
* Exhale - Let the air out slowly (do not blow), saying mentally 'Easy... easy... easy... easy ' with each exhalation.
* Repeat this cycle ten times.

You will soon begin to feel a calm, thoroughly pleasurable feeling - some say a warmth radiating from your chest throughout your body

Now let yourself breathe normally and tell yourself relaxing phrases 'I feel very relaxed... All the tension is going out of me as I exhale and good feelings are coming into me as I inhale... When I am playing my sport, I will be able to take a few deep breaths and by saying, "Easy " will be able to tell myself to relax whenever I feel overly tense... When I am playing, I will recall the good feelings I am experiencing now and they will automatically return to me. Imagine all this happening as you say it to yourself.

Now do as follows:

* Inhale - Breathe in slowly
* Hold breath - Hold it very briefly
* Exhale - Let the air out slowly while mentally saying to yourself 'Easy... easy... easy... easy.'
* Repeat this cycle ten times.

Now let your breathing go naturally, and pay attention to the pleasant feelings in your body. Repeat the same encouraging phrases to yourself that you did earlier. Listen to the sound of your own breath coming in and out. You will notice that the breathing is slow and deep without you having to make it that way. The exhaling will last longer - as long as an eight-count, perhaps.

Continue to do the breathing exercises for the rest of the session, each time alternating the ten cycles of inhale-hold-exhale with the mental encouragement. After the last cycle of ten, just let yourself enjoy the feeling for a minute.

**Easy**

Tell yourself for the rest of the day I will recall these sensations every time I tell myself **'Easy'** (or a word/phrase you prefer to use).

**Stress Management**

Stress is experienced when an individual feels that they cannot cope with a situation with which they are presented. If an athlete is in a stressful situation then their athletic performance, whether this be in competition or in training, will be effected. The coach can limit the effect on performance of [competitive anxiety](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/companx.htm) by assisting the athlete to identify an appropriate coping strategy.

**Accessing and Managing Stress**

There are many aspects of an athlete's life that can be stressful at certain times. This may arise because of commitments in the areas of work, study, sport or family/social life. When commitments in a number of areas coincide then the effect can be stressful which may result in commitments being compromised or in worse case situation their health being affected. As a coach, we need to consider these areas when [planning](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/plan.htm) the annual training program with the athlete. By planning we can reduce the level of stress that the athlete and perhaps the coach will encounter.

Work with your athlete to assess each of the areas (work, study, sport or family/social life) and identify those times in the year where the athlete will be busy, events have a high priority and tasks that will require a high degree of focus. For each of these times rate the level of stress for each area on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is "low", 3 is "medium" and 5 is "high") that the athlete feels he/she could potentially be under. The information can then be plotted on a year planner to provide an indication where potential stressful times could occur and the identification of stress relieving strategies are required.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Month | January | | | | | February | | | |
| Stress ....Week | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 5 |  |  |  |  |  | A | A/C | B | D |
| 4 |  |  |  | A | A | C | B |  |  |
| 3 | A | A | A |  | C | B |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  | B | C/B | B |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | B/C/D | B/C/D | C/D | D | C/D | D | D | A/C/D | A/B/C |

Key: A = Work .... B = Study .... C = Sport .... D = Family/Social

In the example table above: "A" is a project delivery, "B" an exam, "C" an indoor athletics championships meeting and "D" in week 9 a family holiday.

The stress levels around weeks 6 and 7 are accumulating so priorities will need to be determined.

### Tips to avoid stress

Aim to exercise regularly. Exercise dissipates the adrenaline that builds up in stressful situations and leaves us feeling with a sense of achievement and control.

[Eat healthily](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/eating.htm). Ensure you are getting adequate [vitamins](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/vitamins.htm) and [minerals](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/minerals.htm) in your diet. One recommendation that very few of us manage is to eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables daily.

Make sure you are getting enough sleep. People need varying amounts ranging from 5 or 6 hours to 10 hours a night. By trial and error, you will know how much sleep YOU need to perform at your best.

Learn to think clearly and set yourself realistic goals and objectives. Work through one problem at a time in a logical way.

If you feel a panic or anxiety attack coming on, think through the problem by breaking it down. Imagine the worst that can happen. Nine times out of ten, it then appears less serious.

Say NO to tasks and projects you cannot take on. People will not think any less of you. After all, they have not got ESP.

Remember that you are human and mistakes are inevitable. Learn to view mistakes as learning opportunities and problems as challenges.

Practice positive [visualisation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/imagery.htm). Think about a time or a place when you were relaxed and at peace. It could have been on a holiday or a day off. Try to recreate the situation again in your mind, thinking about the sights, sounds and smells you experienced. Visualise yourself back into the scene. You will find that after 5 to 10 minutes you feel much more relaxed as your brain does not know the difference between imagining a situation and actually being there. Some people call it day dreaming but visualisation is a very powerful tool in reducing stress and anxiety.

Take time out for yourself. Make sure you are doing some things in your life because they are important to you, rather than because you ought to or should do. You deserve to take a break occasionally, do not feel guilty enjoy it.

Accept your strengths and weakness and like yourself anyway. If you do not like yourself, you cannot expect anyone else to. Understand also that you cannot change anybody else - only yourself.

Practice physical [relaxation](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/relaxation.htm) techniques. Progressive relaxation contracting and relaxing all the body parts is a very effective way of reducing tension.

[Sports Massage](http://www.brianmac.co.uk/massage.htm) is an alternative method of helping to relieve tension and to relax you.

**Emotional**

**Emotional Factors Affecting Performance**

**Anger**

**Definition**

An emotion whereby the individual has normally been offended, denied, wronged and a tendency to react through retaliation. It is a strong, uncomfortable emotion after being provoked.

**Impact on Performance**

Anger in sport can be very useful in the right situation but more often than not it is about how you control your aggression that makes the difference. Opponents look to ways of irritating each other in the hope it puts them off a game plan or affects their performance.  
Anger can be seen in many different forms in sport. It can be something as simple as a player shouting at themselves after a bad shot, physically lashing out or even over exerting themselves in a skill such as increasing the power of the next serve.  
Anger without control will mostly affect performance negatively and will increase the amount of poor decisions made. A player who controls their anger is much more effective and it pays to practice good mental strength. The ability to control anger comes from practicing in competitive drills which apply pressure to your skill level, such as practicing against a much better opponent or even against more opponents than you.

**Examples of Possible Responses**

"...I was playing badminton and had spotted a weakness in their back court backhand side. I was able to play repeated shots to this area and it was very obvious they were unable to cope consistently. They were getting very angry and this helped me even more as they started making silly decisions and this added to the situation..."  
  
"...I had been in bat for a few overs without scoring, the bowlers were very consistent with their pace and line. This was not a new situation for me as our senior school team had bowlers like this and we faced them all the time in the nets. I waited patiently until a wider delivery at which point I controlled my aggression into the shot and played it to the boundary..."

"...my putting was not particularly good during the round and I was becoming more frustrated and angry with my inability to score well. After one very poor putt I made the silly mistake of allowing my anger to boil over and at the next tee tried to drive the ball much further than normal. My technique was awful and I put my drive into trees. This only added to my poor scoring..."  
  
"...my opposite forward was particularly good at protecting the ball and winning rebounds. I was really getting annoyed at his good play and at myself for letting the team down. I was drawn into making silly fouls against him and eventually my anger and lack of self-control built up to too many fouls and I was fouled out of the game..."

**Gathering Information**

**Profile and Mood State Test – click the link below**

<http://www.brianmac.co.uk/poms.htm>

**Positive And Negative Affect Schedule Questionnaire**

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then list the number from the scale below

next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now,

that is, at the present moment OR indicate the extent you have felt this

way over the past week (circle the instructions you followed when taking

this measure)

1 2 3 4 5

Very Slightly or Not at All A Little Moderately Quite a Bit Extremely

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Interested \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Irritable

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Distressed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Alert

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Excited \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 13. Ashamed

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Upset \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 14. Inspired

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Strong \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 15. Nervous

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Guilty \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 16. Determined

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Scared \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 17. Attentive

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Hostile \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 18. Jittery

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Enthusiastic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 19. Active

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Proud \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 20. Afraid

Scoring Instructions:

Positive Affect Score: Add the scores on items 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 19.

Total = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Scores can range from 10 – 50, with higher scores representing

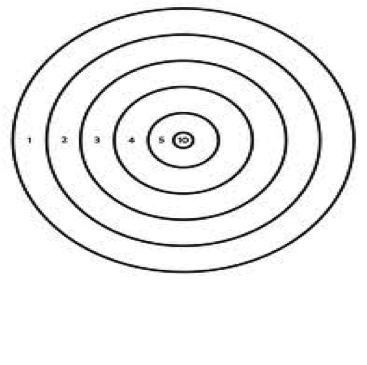
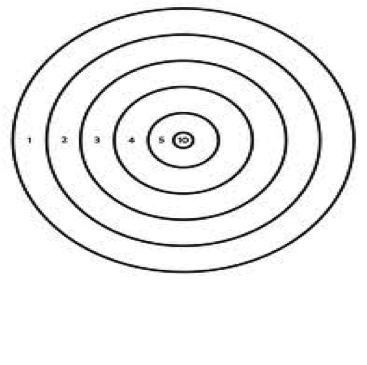
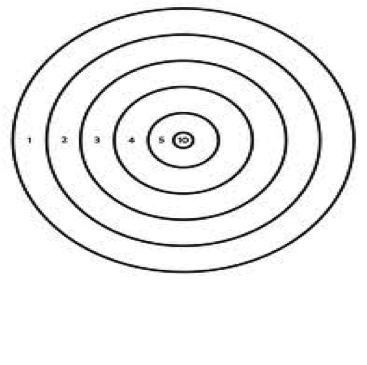
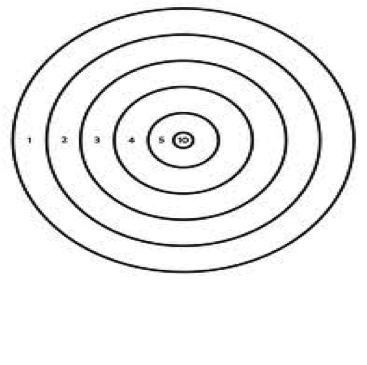
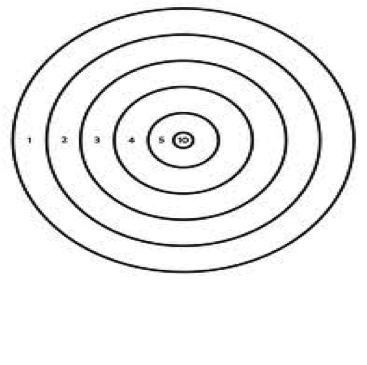
higher levels of positive affect. Mean Scores: Momentary \_ 29.7

( SD \_ 7.9); Weekly \_ 33.3 ( SD \_ 7.2)

Negative Affect Score: Add the scores on items 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, and 20. Scores can range from 10 – 50, with lower scores representing

lower levels of negative affect. Mean Momentary \_ 14.8 ( SD \_ 5.4); Weekly \_ 17.4 ( SD \_ 6.2)

Total = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



**SURPRISE**

**HAPPY**

**/SAD**

**Name:**

**Activity:**

**Event:**

**Date:**

**Instructions:** Based on a recent performance or a performance about to happen, place an X on each of the Emotion Targets (if appropriate) to indicate your perceived emotional status. The athlete should complete the targets as honestly as possible.

For optimum performance in the sport/activity the X should be in the centre of the target. The further away from the centre the less control you have over the emotion.

**Note:** Some activities for example need an element of anger e.g. rugby. If you feel your anger levels are optimum for rugby, place an X in the centre.

The athlete should also complete the questions and comments on page 2 to indicate more information or help determine their perceived emotional status.

This analysis relies on the athletes’ own opinion and their perception of their emotions. It can be completed at a later date and comparisons made.

**SELF REFLECTIVE EMOTION ANALYSIS**

**ANGER**

**FEAR/TRUST**

**SPORT EMOTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

Below you will find a list of words that describe a range of feelings that sport performers may experience. Please read each one carefully and indicate on the scale next to each item how you feel **right now, at this moment, in relation to the upcoming competition**. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one item, but choose the answer which best describes your feelings right now in relation to the upcoming competition.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all | A little | Moderately | Quite a bit | Extremely |
| Uneasy | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Upset | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Exhilarated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Irritated | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Pleased | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Tense | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Sad | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Excited | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Furious | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Joyful | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Nervous | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Unhappy | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Enthusiastic | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Annoyed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Cheerful | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Apprehensive | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Disappointed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Angry | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Energetic | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Happy | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Anxious | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Dejected | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Scoring Instructions:

**Anxiety** = (uneasy + tense + nervous + apprehensive + anxious)/5 =

**Dejection** = (upset + sad + unhappy + disappointed + dejected)/5 =

**Excitement** = (exhilarated + excited + enthusiastic + energetic)/4 =

**Anger** = (irritated + furious + annoyed + angry)/4 =

**Happiness** = (pleased + joyful + cheerful + happy)/4 =

The response stem can be changed to refer to **current** or **previous** competition as required although the SEQ has only been currently validated for pre-competition use.

**Development Approaches – Imagery (Visualisation, Mental Training and Mental Rehearsal)**

**Imagery**

All three terms, above, are used to refer to the regular and intensive mental practice of an action **without** physically performing it. When mental rehearsal of an action is combined with physical rehearsal this improves performance when compared to physical rehearsal by itself.

**Imagery –** Before the activity in preparation

**Visualisation –** During the performance

**Mental Training –** is a combination of both

Athletes who speak of **visualisation**, **mental rehearsal**, **imagery** or mental practice are all referring to the process of creating an experience in the mind – of imagining something. Imagery can be used to experience many aspects of skill learning and sports performance.

“…apart from the physical practice, many more hours were spent mentally rehearsing the effort distribution, pace judgement, stride pattern and hurdling technique for a successful performance.”

**How to Develop Imagery Skills**

To develop imagery skills:

* Decide what you want to mentally rehearse
* Practice when you are relaxed, without distraction and not close to performance
* Imagine performing the movement, concentrate on tension in the muscles, the sequence in which movements occur
* Mental rehearsal should take as long as performing the action in real time
* Imagine seeing yourself performing movements or routines successfully (external)

**SOCIAL**

**Gathering Information on defining roles**

Focus Group Questions

**Aim:**

The aim of this focus group is to investigate the impact of defining roles on my sports team.

**Instructions for use:**

Please use this form to record the proceedings of the focus group. Notes should be extensive and accurately reflect the content of the discussion, as well as any salient observations of nonverbal behaviour, such as facial expressions, hand movements, group dynamics, etc.

Date of Focus Group:

Names of those participating:

Name of Note Taker:

**Questions and Notes:**

Question 1: How well do the team come together both socially and during performance?

Question 2: Does every player feel supported in their role?

Question 3: Are goals an important factor in the team?

Question 4: Is communication clear amongst players and coaches and in what ways?

Question 5: Are you individual players playing in a team or a team of players playing as a team?

**Defining Roles**

Defining the roles, understanding the role responsibilities, and agreeing on who will handle that role is an essential part of every teams progress. Clearly defining roles is vital to team efficiency and success. When team members understand their roles, they will be more productive and have a greater chance of fulfilling their role within the team. Role [definition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition) is particularly important in teams for example, a point guard’s role in Basketball is specifically to bring the ball up the court or the setter’s role in Volleyball is to set the ball up for wider players to spike rather than play the ball over themselves.

**How to develop**

When:  
Coaches should predetermine each team role and responsibility prior to selecting the team member to fill that position. They should take time to assign roles and tasks to each member.

How:  
Avoid assuming team members understand how to carry out their role. Take time to clearly communicate expectations, boundaries, responsibilities and goals to each team member. Ensure time is given to check understanding.

Why:  
Understanding the boundaries and expectations of a role provides [support](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotion) and [accountability](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accountability) for team members in performing their tasks. Pre-defined roles also help to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings between team members ensuring all are aware of expectations within their roles. Allocating each player a role gives responsibility and ownership to fulfill their role and feel part of the team which gives a greater sense of motivation and team cohesiveness.

**Suggested strategies**

* Using a sport education approach to allow all pupils experience of having to define roles in a chosen activity for example, all pupils given the chance to become team coach and allow them to use their own knowledge and understanding to select players accordingly depending on strengths and weaknesses.
* Using a conditioned game, allocate zones within the playing area to help understand where players should be within their roles for example in Basketball mark out wide areas where the forwards must move to when possession is gained. They must remain in this area until ¾ court where they can then cut to the basket.

**Active Listening - Social**

**Definition**

Active listening is a skill that can be acquired and developed with practice. However, active listening can be difficult to master and will, therefore, take time and patience. 'Active listening' means, as its name suggests, actively listening. That is fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively ‘hearing’ the message of the speaker.

Interest can be conveyed to the speaker by using both verbal and non-verbal messages such as maintaining eye contact, nodding your head and smiling, agreeing by saying ‘Yes’ or simply ‘Mmm hmm’ to encourage them to continue. By providing this 'feedback' the person speaking will usually feel more at ease and therefore communicate more easily, openly and honestly.

**Listening is the most fundamental component of interpersonal communication skills.** Listening is not something that just happens (that is hearing), listening is an active process in which a conscious decision is made to listen to and understand the messages of the speaker. Listeners should remain neutral and non-judgmental, this means trying not to take sides or form opinions, especially early in the conversation. Active listening is also about patience - pauses and short periods of silence should be accepted. Listeners should not be tempted to jump in with questions or comments every time there are a few seconds of silence. Active listening involves giving the other person time to explore their thoughts and feelings, they should, therefore, be given adequate time for that.

**Active listening not only means focusing fully on the speaker but also actively showing verbal and non-verbal signs of listening.** Generally speakers want listeners to demonstrate ‘active listening’ by responding appropriately to what they are saying. Appropriate responses to listening can be both verbal and non-verbal.

**How to develop**

When:

Set yourself a routine before active listening e.g. count to 10 to prepare yourself and focus.

Build up to limiting this time creating efficiency of focus

How:

Self-evaluate what you have heard e.g. answer a set of questions or write a summary

Why:

Check if you have been successful in active listening

Check for understanding

**Suggested strategies**

* Debate on controversial area in sports e.g. goal line technology in football
* Discussion in practical setting on why lost goal/basket within a game

**1. Stop Talking**

“If we were supposed to talk more than we listen, we would have two tongues and one ear.” Mark Twain.

Don't talk, listen. When somebody else is talking listen to what they are saying, do not interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. Stop, just listen. When the other person has finished talking you may need to clarify to ensure you have received their message accurately.

**2. Prepare Yourself to Listen**

Focus on the speaker. Put other things out of mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts – what’s for lunch, what time do I need to leave to catch my train, is it going to rain – try to put other thoughts out of mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

**3. Put the Speaker at Ease**

Help the speaker to feel free to speak. Remember their needs and concerns. Nod or use other gestures or words to encourage them to continue. Maintain eye contact but don’t stare – show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

**4. Remove Distractions**

Focus on what is being said. Avoid unnecessary interruptions. These behaviours disrupt the listening process and send messages to the speaker that you are bored or distracted.

**5. Empathise**

Try to understand the other person’s point of view. Look at issues from their perspective. Let go of preconceived ideas. By having an open mind we can more fully empathise with the speaker. If the speaker says something that you disagree with then wait and construct an argument to counter what is said but keep an open mind to the views and opinions of others.

**6. Be Patient**

A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished. Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time, sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Never interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

**7. Avoid Personal Prejudice**

Try to be impartial. Don't become irritated and don't let the person’s habits or mannerisms distract you from what they are really saying. Everybody has a different way of speaking - some people are for example more nervous or shy than others, some have regional accents or make excessive arm movements, some people like to pace whilst talking - others like to sit still. Focus on what is being said and try to ignore styles of delivery.

**8. Listen to the Tone**

Volume and tone both add to what someone is saying. A good speaker will use both volume and tone to their advantage to keep an audience attentive; everybody will use pitch, tone and volume of voice in certain situations – let these help you to understand the emphasis of what is being said.

**9. Listen for Ideas – Not Just Words**

You need to get the whole picture, not just isolated bits and pieces. Maybe one of the most difficult aspects of listening is the ability to link together pieces of information to reveal the ideas of others. With proper concentration, letting go of distractions, and focus this becomes easier.

**10. Wait and Watch for Non-Verbal Communication**

Gestures, facial expressions, and eye-movements can all be important. We don’t just listen with our ears but also with our eyes – watch and pick up the additional information being transmitted via non-verbal communication.

**Partner/Group Work**

We can use this approach to develop social factors such as co-operating, supporting/building relationships & contributing to a team group.

Examples of Partner/Group work are-

1. **Conditioned games**. In basketball a condition may be put on the game that every team member must touch the ball prior to a shot at the basket. This ensures that all are involved and contributing to the team. Another condition may be that players must communicate verbally/ non verbally before receiving the ball by calling for the pass, clapping or signal where they want the ball. This encourages everyone within the team to cooperate and build relationships.
2. **Team meetings/presentations** This may or may not be based in a classroom session. Team members use this time to self & peer assess team members qualities and areas of development and then present to the rest of the class. This approach encourages pupils positive interdependence, cooperation and ensures they are all contributing to the team.
3. **Working in groups with individuals taking responsibility on a shared basis.** Team members take it in turns to lead specific parts of training sessions such as warm –ups or skill development practices. This techniques builds responsibility, mutual respect and helps pupils develop their social skills.

**Positive Reinforcement techniques**

We can use this approach to develop social factors such as respect for self and others and self-conduct and inclusion.

Examples of Positive reinforcement techniques are-

1. **Sports Ed model** – Rotating roles within the team to ensure pupils undertake the responsibility of being a coach. The emphasis of this would be for pupils to adopt a positive attitude and praise/ encourage members of their team highlighting success within their performance.
2. **Group vote/ Awards –** At various points throughout a block teachers can facilitate a class vote where they nominate team mates for awards such as MVP, Most Improved Player, Play of the Day etc. This is aimed at building relationships and a positive ethos within the team. Also builds mutual respect.
3. **Training Diary/ Record of progress –** Encourages positive self-evaluation and tracking of personal development within the activity.

**Factors Impacting on Performance**

**Social:-**

**Team Dynamics**

**Definition:** A team is any group of people that work together to accomplish a shared goal.

**Team Dynamics**

 Co-operating/Competing

 Contributing to the team

 Individual roles/responsibilities within team

 Can work in isolation

 Inclusion/Gender issues

 Respect for self & others

 Relationships

 Codes of conduct

 Written rules

 Unwritten rules

 Ethics

**Gathering Date:** - Questionnaire

- Coach Feedback

**Approach:** - Building team dynamics

**Examples of this approach in use:**

 **Conditioned Games** can be used for boxes A-D e.g. front and back game, agree with your partner that you must play 4 overhead clears before you can win a point (this example would be for box A)

 **Tasks with defined roles** can be used for boxes A-C e.g. pupils are given designated roles, depends on topic within structures and strategies e.g. zone defence or fast break in basketball.

 **Relaxations & managing emotion techniques** can be used for box D e.g. counting to 10, deep breathing, voluntary time outs, muscle tense and relax.

**A**

**B**

**C**

**D**

**Gathering Date:** - Questionnaire

- Self appraisal (emotions)

**Approach:** - Self-esteem building activities.

**Examples of the approach in use:**

 **Given a role**

 In the classroom setting; co-op learning roles e.g. scribe, time keeper, reporter

 Within a team; coach, manager, captain

 Within a task; feeder, observer. Performer

 **Positive team feedback on role performance** after pupils have fulfilled role for a period of time others provide positive feedback on how welkl they have performed their role.

 **Positive self talk** if pupil starts to think negatively they should repeat a positive word or phrase to themselves e.g. ‘contribute’/ ‘I can do this’.

 **Body language awareness** encourage ’self checks’ ‘How am I standing? Am I making eye contact? Do I look interested?

  **Physical gestures of encouragement** e.g. volleyball, high fives, pat on the back, huddle

**Factors Impacting on Performance**

**Social:-**

**Self-Esteem**

**Definition:** the worth that one believes one has as an individual.