

WORKSHEET 10

PREPARING A PERFORMANCE USING MENTAL TRAINING¹

Positive visualization exercises like the one below have the best effects when you do them directly before going to sleep. Try this one for a few nights before an important performance to release fear and stress and to program positive expectations.

Step 1: The scenario that arises

Touching lightly each side of your forehead with the second and third finger of each hand, and also your temples - with the thumb of each hand touching the ring finger. Scan the entire piece or program. Read through the music and imagine playing it. Notice the stress that arises.

Step 2: The scenario that emerges

Repeat the procedure, this time imagining it as vividly as possible. Allow for any positive or negative details that arise. Imagine the whole situation – the people around you, how you feel, what it sounds like, the room, the reactions of people and your own reactions.

Step 3: The optimal scenario

Repeat once again, this time imagining exactly what you would love to occur. Imagine all the details – the optimal sounds, feelings and reactions.

BRAIN INTEGRATION EXERCISES

Good practice requires the two hemispheres of your brain to be communicating with one another via the corpus callosum. The best way to stimulate this is movement that involves both sides of your body (and both brain hemispheres) simultaneously. For this reason walking, running and swimming are not only good for your body, but for your brain. Cross crawling (see below) works well if you 'dance' to music. If you tap your foot whilst playing, try tapping with alternate feet.

Cross crawl

Whist standing, lift one leg and tap the knee with your opposite hand, and then the other. Continue for a few minutes rhythmically and energetically.

Variations

Tap the heel of your foot behind you with the opposite hand, then the other.

Kick one leg out and stretch out the opposite hand, then the other side.

Figure eight

With arms extended in front of you and palms together, make a movement in the shape of an eight on its side.

Make big movements with your whole body. When you cross the middle point, you are shifting from one hemisphere of your brain to the other.



¹ ESR: Emotional Stress release exercise (from applied kinesiology)