

Ideal Performance State (IPS):

What is a stressor: list an example

Reactions to stressors/ Stress Response-

- 1.Environmental Demand
- 2.Individual's **Perception** of the Demand
 - 20 minute worry period in morning
- 3.Stress Response
- 4.Behavioural Consequences

Centering to control over-reactions to stressors:

- Breathing
- Jump up & land in a relaxed confident position
- Breathe in powerful energy through nose, focus on stomach expanding, breathe out negative energy through mouth, shoulders drop on exhalation
- Progressive Muscular Relaxation (PMR)

Controlling under-reactions towards races

- Cue words, pump-up music
- Write down when you need these energizing aids and which aid works best in each situation to prepare for under arousal

Be in control of your emotions- Learn how to change your perception towards stressors

EI worksheet

Emotional energy management

- Mental preparation routines
 - Physically and mentally energize/warm-up
 - Consistency
 - Plan emergency or shrink routines

Progressive Muscular Relaxation (PMR):

Think of a situation where you were under pressure to perform in a swimming race. Put yourself in that moment. I want you to think about how nervous or anxious you are, feel how tense your muscles are, how are you breathing? What distractions have entered your train of thought? Now that you have put yourself in that anxious moment, I will guide you through progressive muscular relaxation to help you achieve a more relaxed state. I want you to think of the relaxed state of mind and body that you want to achieve to be able to perform optimally.

Find a quiet place, dim lights, lie down or get in a comfortable position with legs uncrossed, loosen tight clothing. **PMR** consists of tensing and then immediately relaxing specific muscles. Try to pay attention to how it feels to be relaxed instead of tensed. I will take you through one set of each major muscle group but for beginners, it is recommended that each muscle group should be worked on twice.

Lets start off by taking a deep breath and exhale slowly. Focus on relaxing.

- 1) Raise arms, extend them in front of you, tight fist with both hands. Be aware of uncomfortable tension in hands, fingers and knuckles for 5 seconds, let go half way and hold for another 5 seconds. Let your hands completely relax for 10-15 seconds, let tension and discomfort drain from your hands.
- 2) Tense upper arms... Again, be aware of uncomfortable tension in your shoulders, hold the tension for 5 seconds. Now decrease the tension by 50% and hold for another 5 seconds. Let go of the tension and rest your arms by letting them limply hang at your sides
- 3) Curl toes tight...repeat
- 4) Point toes away and tense feet and calves...repeat
- 5) Extend legs, raise them 6 inches off floor and tense thigh muscles...repeat but rest for 30 seconds
- 6) Tense stomach as tight as can...repeat and spread relaxation until stomach completely relaxed
- 7) Press palms together to tighten chest and shoulder muscles...repeat and concentrate on muscles that we have already relaxed
- 8) Push back into back of chair as hard as can...feel relaxation spread over the area
- 9) Keeping your torso, arms and legs relaxed, tense your neck by bringing your head forward digging your chin into your chest...repeat and let head hang comfortably.
- 10) Clench teeth, feel tension in jaw muscles. Let jaw and facial muscles relax with lips slightly parted
- 11) Wrinkle forehead and scalp
- 12) Relax full body for 1 min
- 13) Breathing serves as a cue for effective relaxation, otherwise known as cue-controlled relaxation:. Take a series of short inhalations, about 1 per second, until your chest is filled, hold breath for 5 seconds, then exhale slowly for 10 seconds while saying the words "relax" or "calm" to yourself...repeat 5 times

Now I hope you are more in the state of body and mind at which you perform optimally. To practice this skill so that it will be effective when you really are performing under pressure, try PMR with music that usually increases your arousal level and try to stay relaxed regardless of the distractions around you.