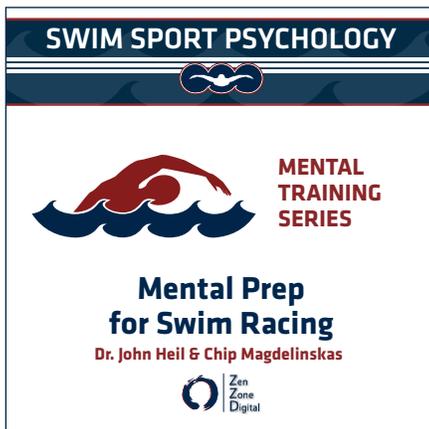


SWIM SPORT PSYCHOLOGY



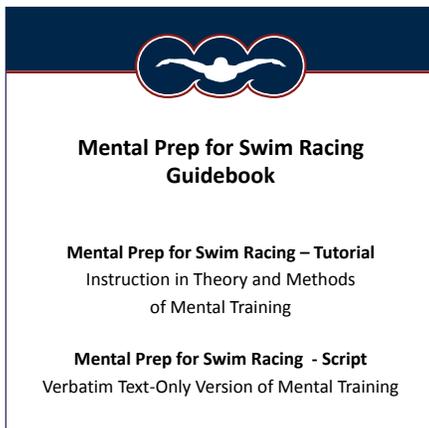
MENTAL PREP for SWIM RACING GUIDE BOOK

Mental Prep for Swim Racing has 2 components: The Swim Racing Mental Training Program (which can be accessed by returning to the Main Menu), and the Mental Prep for Swim Racing Guide Book – which appears below.

This is the Mental Prep for Swim Racing Guide Book – It describes the theory and methods used in constructing the Mental Training Program, offers guidance for personal practice and for customizing mental training.

The Guide Book includes a Swim Racing Tutorial and a Script of the Swim Racing Mental Training Program.

These materials enable users to study the program in detail and to develop a customized and personalized approach to mental training.



Mental Prep for Swim Racing Tutorial

The **Swim Racing Mental Training Program** is a performance routine that sharpens mental skills and prepares the swimmer to bring a best performance to race day. It reflects many of the common challenges found in swim racing at any level.





About Sport Psychology & Performance Routines

The goal of sport psychology is to build mental skills to enhance performance, especially performance under pressure. Mental training is the means by which psychological skills are built. There are 5 cardinal skills of mental training. These are: intensity control, concentration, self-talk, imagery and performance routines.

The Swim Racing Mental Training Program presents a performance routine. It prepares the swimmer for racing by developing an action plan and by rehearsing this plan – so that it is ready to use on race day. Like any performance routine, the purpose of the Swim Racing Mental Training Program is to bring a systematic and disciplined approach to swim racing, from the first event to the last event of the day.

The building blocks of the performance routine are intensity control, concentration, self-talk, and imagery. This mental training exercise begins with a practice of intensity control methods, and is followed by a series of imagery based scenarios that incorporate concentration and self-talk.



Performance Routines

- Incorporate Cardinal Skills
- Blend Physical & Psych Prep & Logistics
- Review & Revise over Time

- Control the 'Internal' Environment
Thoughts & Feelings
- Control the 'External' Environment
Stress & Pressure of Racing



Swim Racing Mental Training Description

The Mental Training Program begins with thoughts of the swim racing the night before, presents a psychological race plan, and concludes with a final performance critique.



Intensity & the 'Zone'

| |
|---|
| Increased Muscle Tension Increased Distractibility |
| Zone |
| Low Energy Weak Focus |

Intensity Control

There are two intensity control techniques presented. The method begins with a lengthy relaxation focusing technique which lowers or down regulates intensity through breathing and muscle relaxation. In addition, this helps set the stage for the use of imagery, which typically is more clear and vivid in a quiet state of mind.



Breathing Pattern

"Smooth Deep Regular"

Breathing as Key to Intensity Control

Appears Repeatedly Throughout Routine

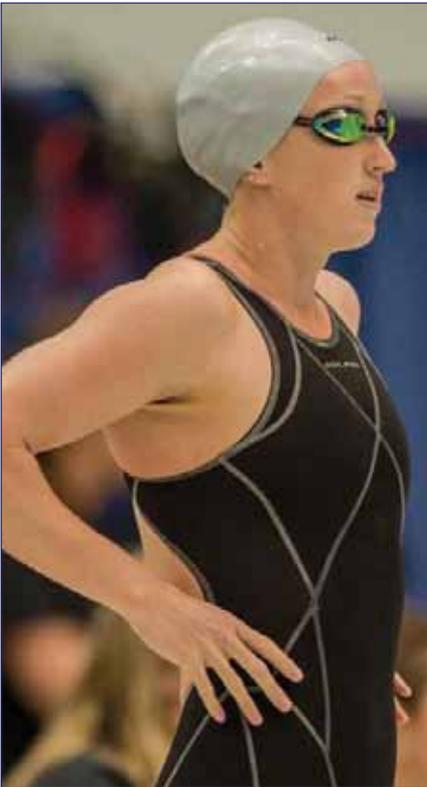
Role of Proper Breathing in Swim Racing

The second of the intensity control methods is brief and designed for use during racing. It is reinforced and strengthened by incorporating imagery. The feel of the water off of each turn is used to reinforce the fundamental race mind-set of relaxed muscles and physiological intensity. Each of the sport scenarios concludes with a focus on breathing "smooth, deep and regular".

The substantial attention given to breathing in this mental training program recognizes the critical role of proper breathing both technically and psychologically.

Imagery Scenarios

The scenarios recreate the experience of racing, including the critical moments that typically precede the start of the event. The initial segment of the performance routine calls up the sights and sounds and feel of a swim venue on race day. It is designed to help the athlete begin to prepare by focusing on the meet in a positive and disciplined way. This is followed by a series of 4 scenarios that capture moments leading up to the race, including: Awakening on the day of the meet, arriving at the swim venue, starting warm-up and first entering the pool, and the moment right before the start. These are intended to ready the swimmer to be fully focused when the race begins. This is followed by a series of 4 race scenarios, which include: the start, the first turn, the middle portion of the race, and the approach to the finish. These are intended to reinforce a steady and positive mind set and a consistent focus on the technical fundamental of racing. The scenarios conclude with a race review which guides the swimmer through a balanced self-critique.





Concentration & Self-Talk

Concentration

Strength & Endurance
Speed & Flexibility

Self-Talk

Psychological Affirmations
Reinforce Technique & Tactics



Customizing Mental Training

15 Modules

Goal Focus [1]
Intensity Control [3]
Transition Imagery [1]
Pre-Race Imagery [4]
Race Imagery [4]
Post-Race Critique [1]
Closing [1]

Concentration and Self-Talk

Concentration and self-talk are consistently integrated into the intensity training and imagery based scenarios. Concentration skills are practiced most obviously within the scenarios, as attention to the proper mind set as well as a tenacious and disciplined focus on the technical fundamentals. In a less obvious way this prepares the swimmer to resist the distraction such as self-doubt and fatigue that can undermine performance. Self-talk appears throughout the routine as the affirmation “Confident, Composed and Focused.” Swimming with confidence means being composed and focused – Being composed and focused means swimming with confidence.

Role of Language in Mental Training

The language of the script is performance oriented focusing on skill execution and proper mind set. It does not use “results” oriented language, such as mention of times or place finished. This is based on the understanding that a focus on skill will bring results.

Expectation for specific results would be addressed independently as part of a goal-setting program.

The language of the script intentionally includes a substantial degree of repetition. This appears to help the mental training technique become more deeply ingrained and therefore, more accessible under stress. Like physical training, mental training relies on repetition.

Customizing Mental Training

This particular training routine is meant as a starting point for developing a personal approach to racing. It is to be easily modifiable. In this regard, it is useful to think of each scenario as a modular unit which can be changed or removed altogether. For each scenario the athlete can change the details of the particular situation, change the psychological response to the situation, or remove the scenario altogether. The length of the script can be varied, by increasing or



decreasing the number of scenarios included. Any and all specific phrasing is modifiable. For example, if the affirmation “Confident, composed and focused” is not suitable or meaningful to an individual athlete it could be changed.

The text version of the script can be used as a starting point work for work on modifying the language mental training.

Mental Training Mind-Set



Like most audio scripts, this is typically practiced in the traditional fashion with eyes closed. However, this particular product is designed also for eyes open use. Working with eyes open can be a useful step in transferring mental skills from the practice setting to competition. It works particularly well when under stress or when it is difficult to maintain focus with eyes closed.

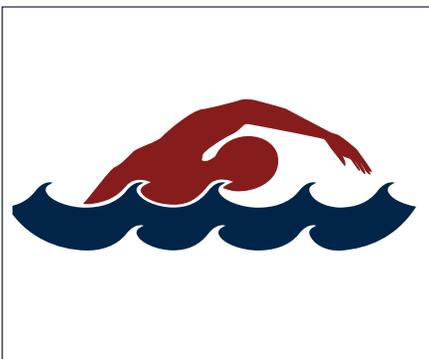


Reading the script as text, and experiencing it as a mental training exercise are fundamentally different. The purpose of mental training is to get inside the experience of competition – to live it, not to simply think about it.

About the Swim Racing Script

The script of the Swim Racing Mental Training Program follows. It is a verbatim, text-only version which can be read and studied. The written version lends itself to modification and is a good starting point for those who would like to refine or otherwise customize the mental training program.

The multimedia version of the Swim Racing Mental Training Program, which includes voice and music as well as photos and video, can be played by returning to the Main Menu.





MENTAL PREP FOR SWIM RACING SCRIPT

Goal Focus

Through mental training you can build psychological skills for racing and be ready to swim with confidence, composure and focus.

Breathing Instruction #1

Begin by turning your attention to your breathing. Simply notice the way in which you breathe. Is it shallow or deep, rough & irregular, or smooth and regular? Slowly, gradually allow yourself to come to a way of breathing that is smooth, deep and regular; Smooth, deep and regular.

Imagine your lungs like balloons that fill up with air when you breathe and relax when you breathe out

Notice the feeling of fullness, of energy as you breathe in. Notice the feeling of relaxation, of letting go as you breathe out.

Breathing is a way that is smooth, deep and regular; Smooth, deep and regular.

Muscle Relaxation

You can deepen this feeling by relaxing the muscles of your body, one group of muscles at a time. You can do this by counting from "1 to 10", and for each number you count, relaxing a particular set of muscles. To begin, take in a long deep breath and count 1, focus on your belly, feel the muscles, hold the breath until ready and then breathe out and relax. With the next breath in, count 2, focus on the chest, feel the muscles, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. Next breath in, count 3, focus on the back, from hips to shoulders, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax.

Notice the feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your lungs as you breathe out, and notice this same feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your muscles as you breathe out.

With your next breath in, count 4, focus on your upper legs, from hips to knees, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. Next breath in, count 5, focus on your lower legs, from knees to toes, hold the



breath until ready then breathe out and relax. Notice a pleasant wave of relaxation moving all the way out to the tips of your toes.

Notice the feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your lungs as you breathe out, and notice this same feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your muscles as you breathe out.

With your next breath in, count 6, focus on your upper arms, from shoulders to elbows, feel the muscles, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. The next breath in, count 7, focus on your lower arms, from elbows to fingertips, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. Notice a pleasant wave of relaxation moving all the way out to the tips of your fingers.

Notice the feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your lungs as you breathe out, and notice this same feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your muscles as you breathe out.

With your next breath in, count 8, focus on your neck and shoulders, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. The next breath in, count 9, focus on your face, forehead, and head, hold the breath until ready, then breathe out and relax. Notice

a pleasant wave of relaxation moving all the way out to the top of your head.

Next take in a long, smooth, deep breath count 10 and focus on relaxing your entire body all at once, hold your breath until ready, then breathe out and relax.

Notice the feeling of relaxation, of letting go in your lungs as you breathe out, and notice this same feeling of relaxation of, letting go in your muscles as you breathe out.

Breathing is a way that is smooth, deep and regular; Smooth, deep and regular.

Brief Pause

Breathing #2 - Quick Relaxation Instruction

In a moment you will take in a long smooth deep breath. As you hold your breath you will imagine that there is a hoop hovering over your head and that as you breathe out, that the hoop will drop along the length of your body, creating a wave of relaxing energy that moves from the top of your head, along



the length of your body to the tips of your fingers and toes. The hoop will drop past your head and neck, past your shoulders and arms, past your chest and back, past your waist and hips, past your thighs and knees, and all the way down to the bottom of your feet. You will feel a wave of relaxing energy.

Now take in a long deep breath and count 10. Then as you breathe out imagine the hoop dropping along the length of your body, creating a wave of relaxing energy that moves from the top of your head, along the length of your body to the tips of your fingers and toes.

As the hoop drops feel a wave of relaxing energy move past your head and neck, past your shoulders and arms, past your chest and back, past your waist and hips, past your thighs and knees, and moving all the way down to the bottom of your feet. You feel a wave of relaxing energy.

Imagery - Setting the Stage

You can use your mind's eye, the eye of your imagination, to become ready to swim – to become confident, composed and focused. Imagine that your mind is like a screen on which you can project any

swimming situation. In your mind's eye, the eye of your imagination you can see any race day situation and practice how you will react

Now imagine that you are on the pool deck. You hear the familiar sounds of race day, the sounds of voices, of water splashing. You notice the familiar smell. You see the color of the water in the pool. You see the lane markers and banners. You think of the feel of the water.

Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - Morning of Competition

Your mind's eye opens. You are waking up the morning of the day of the meet. As the feeling of sleep slips away your thoughts turn to the meet. You review your goals.

Now see yourself swimming. Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered.



Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - Arrive at Venue

Your mind's eye opens. Imagine you are arriving at the pool. You hear the familiar sounds of race day, the sounds of voices, of water splashing. You notice the familiar smell. You see the color of the water in the pool, you see the lane markers and banners. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet.

Now see yourself swimming. Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - Pre-Race Routine - Warm-Up

Your mind's eye opens. Imagine you are at the pool going through your pre-race routine, comfortably and methodically. Then as you dive in, you notice the sudden silence of being under water. You feel the energy and excitement of racing. You feel the coolness of the water. You feel it rush along the length of your body. You feel a wave of relaxing energy moving from the top of your head along the length of your body.

You preview your race. Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You look forward to racing.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.



Imagery - Pre-Race Routine-Ready to Go

Your mind's eye opens. Now imagine race time is approaching. You move to the start and begin your final physical and mental prep for the race. You move through your pre-race routine comfortably and methodically. Your focus grows stronger and stronger. You pause to review your race strategy and goals.

You look forward to the race. Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You see your strategy play out. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You are ready to race.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - Race Start

Your mind's eye opens. As you step on the blocks, your focus grows stronger and stronger. You are thinking about racing and only racing. All other thoughts fall away. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You are ready to race.

At the sound of the start you explode off the blocks. As you dive in you notice the sudden silence of being under water. You are energized. You feel the coolness of the water. You feel it rush along the length of your body. You feel a wave of relaxing energy moving from the top of your head along the length of your body.

Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You are racing.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - First Turn

Your mind's eye opens. You move into the first turn and as you explode off the wall, you feel the water rush along your body. You feel a wave of relaxing energy moving from the top of your head along the length of your body.



Your stroke is smooth. You feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You are racing.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Imagery - Progress of Race

Your mind's opens. The race continues on. You feel the effort of the race. But as you explode off the wall with each turn, you feel the water rush along your body. You feel a wave of relaxing energy moving from the top of your head along the length of your body.

Your stroke is smooth, you feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You feel the energy and excitement of the meet. You are racing.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Brief Pause

Imagery - Finishing the Race

Your mind's opens. You are moving to the finish of the race. You feel the effort of the race. You feel the pull of the finish.

Your stroke is smooth. You feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is effortless and efficient. You feel the energy and excitement of the finish.

Then the image of the scenario fades away. Your breathing is smooth, deep, and regular... smooth, deep, and regular. You are confident, composed and focused.

Brief Pause



Imagery - Race Review

Your mind's eye opens. Take a moment to absorb the lessons of the race. In your imagination you review the race. You identify what you have done well and what you would like to improve. In your imagination picture the things you did well. In your imagination picture the things you would like to improve and then re- picture them done well.

Now take a moment to look forward to your next race. Imagine that you are on the pool deck. You hear the familiar sounds of race day, the sounds of voices, of water splashing. You notice the familiar smell. You see the color of the water in the pool. You see the lane markers and banners.

You review your goals. You see yourself swimming. Your stroke is smooth. You feel the water. Your kick is strong and powered. Your breathing is steady and in rhythm. Your swimming is efficient and effortless. You look forward to the energy and excitement of the next meet.

Brief Pause

Closing

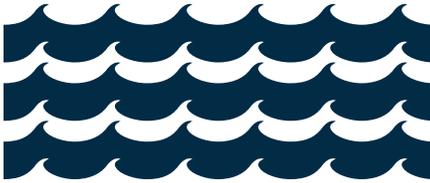
Now take a moment to rest. Begin by turning your attention to your breathing. Simply notice the way in which you breathe. Is it fast or slow, rough & irregular, or smooth & regular? Slowly, gradually allow yourself to come to a way of breathing that is smooth, deep and regular; Smooth, deep and regular.

Brief Pause

Now allow yourself to be aware of your surroundings. Ready in a moment to open your eyes. With a count backwards from "10 to 1", you will feel yourself grow more alert even as you remain confident, composed and focused. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Eyes open.

End of Mental Prep for Swim Racing Script

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Swim Sport Psychology

Founded by Dr. John Heil & Chip Magdelinskas



Dr. John Heil is a sport psychologist and clinical psychologist with Psychological Health Roanoke. Dr. Heil works with Olympic, professional, collegiate and youth athletes and sports organizations. He is a lecturer at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and an instructor at the Roanoke City Police Academy. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Virginia Amateur Sport and has served as Director of Sports Medicine for USA Fencing and for the Commonwealth Games of Virginia. He is widely published in sport and performance psychology. Dr Heil is President-elect of the American Psychological Association Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology.



Chip Magdelinskas has been involved in the field of communications for over 35 years. For 12 of those, Chip headed Focal Point Productions, a corporate communications firm he founded. Here he worked with a roster of Fortune 500 clients, including *Sports Illustrated*, CBS Broadcasting, *Forbes Magazine*, and Group W Broadcasting. Productions for *Reader's Digest* and LifeFleet have been Telly and New York International Film Festival award winners. Chip has also held senior communications positions in the health care field at CareLine, Inc, MedTrans, and American Medical Response. Currently Chip performs communications consulting services while serving as the head of *Celebrate Life! Productions*.

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