



# Durham Attack

## Women's Volleyball

### Psychological Skills

" The will to prepare, the guts to risk, and the desire to be the best... these are the trademarks of a champion ! "

## **Durham Attack Volleyball Team Philosophy:**

Durham Attack Volleyball teams will, at all times, **STRIVE** to be the very best that they are capable of becoming. Each individual on the team must recognize that she is part of the team, she is not **THE** team. All the things we do have team success as the main goal. This means that at times your own individual goals may take a backseat to the team goals. You must be mature enough to accept this as essential to the operation of our **team**.

To do this we must :

1. **NEVER** make excuses.
2. Encourage teammates with positive praise.
3. Accept referees decisions.
4. Be modest when you win, and show composure after a setback.

Nowhere in life is the desire to win expressed more than in sport. However, victory is often the most elusive thing we will ever chase. It is important to remember that we may play the best we possibly can and still not win. Winning is not the only measure of success, the quality of our competition is what matters, not the final score. WE must be committed to giving the very best of ourselves at all times, and not just in the gymnasium. In everything you do, do it to the best of your abilities, so at the end of the day you can ask yourself "Was I the best person I could be today? ", and answer with an emphatic " YES !! "

# The Definite Ten of Attack Volleyball

1. **BE COMMITTED TO HARD WORK:** Our program is built upon the concept that hard work pays off. If we work harder than anyone else... we will always deserve to win. There is a reason that the best are the best... They work at it !!!
2. **BE COMMITTED TO BECOMING A SMARTER PLAYER:** We must be ready to learn. Our belief is that if we work smarter than anyone else we deserve to win. We must be able to understand the game, be good listeners and learn by watching. We will prepare mentally for both practices and games.
3. **BE COMMITTED TO OUR TEAM ATTITUDE CONCEPT:** We must have players who believe in our team concept. Our program is built upon the concept the no person is bigger than the team... We need unselfish players.
4. **COMMIT YOURSELF TO A WINNING ATTITUDE:** Our players must be committed to winning, but understand that we do not measure success by winning alone. Each time we play we evaluate ourselves, on reaching our potential. The test is to play against the game not our opponents. Never quitting and always looking for a way to win.
5. **BE COMMITTED TO HAVING CLASS:** Treat coaches, parents, support staff, and teammates with class. Treat others the way you wish to be treated. Remember to say please and thank you...
6. **BE COMMITTED TO DOING THE RIGHT THING:** There are plenty of rules... Realize that if you try to do the right thing you will be OK.
7. **BELIEVE IN OUR SYSTEM:** Commit yourself to our philosophy, to our system of play. Be a sponge, and soak up the concepts of how we play. Learn your role... then accept it and do the best you can.
8. **BELIEVE IN YOURSELF:** Play with confidence... think positive... realize you are a great player in a great program. Don't get down when you play poorly... realize that you were chosen to be here... be a leader. Lead by example. Remember you would not be here if you couldn't do it!
9. **BELIEVE IN YOUR TEAMATES:** Communicate with each other... help each other. Remember that we are all in this together, the strength of the pack is in the wolf and the strength of the wolf is in the pack. Encourage and support each other. Don't ever forget the importance of the shell around the team. Be a friend. We understand that we are all different ... be tolerant of teammates and others.
10. **BELIEVE IN YOUR COACHES:** Know that your coaches are trying to make you better people and players. Ask questions... but don't whine and complain. Learn to take tough coaching. You must believe that the coaches are doing what they think is right for the team.

SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY,  
NOT A DESTINATION.

DO NOT GO WHERE THE PATH MAY LEAD  
GO INSTEAD, WHERE THERE IS NO PATH AND LEAVE A TRAIL.  
THE HEIGHTS BY GREAT MEN REACHED WERE NOT OBTAINED BY SUDDEN FLIGHT.  
BUT THEY, WHILE THEIR COMPETITORS SLEPT, WERE TOILING UPWARD IN THE NIGHT.  
THE VERY SUBSTANCE OF THE AMBITIONS IS MERELY THE SHADOW OF A DREAM.  
ACCEPT THE CHALLENGES, SO THAT YOU MAY FEEL THE EXHILARATION OF VICTORY.  
FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS, FOR AS YOU DREAM YOU SHALL BECOME!!

**WE CONTROL OUR ATTITUDE AND OUR EFFORT !!!**

# Durham Attack Volleyball

1. We will play with tremendous desire and pride defensively.
2. We will talk and communicate at all times on offence and defence to allow ourselves to play together as a team.
3. We will strive to be in the best shape of our lives.
4. We will recognize the advantage situation, and take it.
5. We will win because we are winners !
6. We are all part of this team because the coach believes in each of us as individuals and as a cohesive unit. We support and encourage each other positively in games and practices. We will work together towards the common goal; the coach is the only one who will criticize players and the team constructively.
7. We will play with enthusiasm and enjoyment; the result is the fun and success.
8. We will give more than what is asked and take less than is deserved.
9. We will make mistakes when we play and use them to improve instead of making excuses.
10. We will have a desire to excel for the benefit of those relying on you.

Champions aren't made in the gym. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them: A desire, a dream, and a vision. They have late minute stamina, they have to be a little faster, they have the skill and the will.....

But the will must be stronger than the skill !

- Muhammad Ali

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## Winners vs. Losers

The Winner-  
Is always part of the answer.

The Loser-  
Is always part of the problem.

The Winner-  
always has a program;

The Loser-  
Always has an excuse;

The Winner-  
Says ' Let me do it for you'

The Loser-  
Says ' That's not my job!'

The Winner-  
Sees an answer for every problem;

The Loser-  
Sees a problem with every answer;

The Winner-  
Sees a green near every sand trap;

The Loser-  
Sees two or three sand traps near every green;

The Winner-  
Says, ' It may be difficult but it's possible'

The Loser-  
Says, ' It may be possible but it's too difficult'

**BE A WINNER !!!!**

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## **ATTITUDES THAT BUILD WINNERS**

Psychologists have identified 11 mental attitudes which play a key role in athletic success. How many of these do you possess ?

1. Desire – Desire provides the drive that carries an athlete to success. Dedicated athletes have a strong desire to improve, compete, and to win. No one gets to be the best without a burning desire to be the best. **How strong is your desire?**
2. Aggressiveness – Winners make things happen rather than waiting for them to happen. They take charge, force action, and produce results. They assert themselves strongly, make their presence felt. They thrive on competition. **Are you an aggressive competitor ?**
3. Determination – Determination makes winners. The refusal to quit or accept defeat; the persistence to try and try again; the willingness to practice long and hard. Determined athletes are relentless in their efforts to improve and win. **Are you a determined competitor?**
4. Responsibility – Winners accept responsibility for their actions. They recognize their own mistakes and the need for change and improvement. They admit errors and will not blame others or make excuses. **Do you accept personal responsibility?**
5. Leadership – Winners tend to enjoy the role of leader. When leadership is needed, they step forward and take charge. They are dynamic people who like to influence others to take control of the situation. **Do you take the lead?**
6. Self Confidence – Self confidence build winners. Winners have confidence in their abilities and can act decisively. They believe they can successfully meet challenges, handle unexpected situations. Never doubt their own ability. **Do you believe in yourself?**
7. Emotional control – Successful athletes can handle the pressure of competitive sports. They stay cool, adjust quickly, and are not upset by bad breaks or bad calls. They deliver top performance regardless of the circumstances. **Do you stay cool under pressure?**
8. Mental toughness – Mental toughness is a huge factor in athletic success. Winners can accept strong criticism and rigorous training from a demanding coach. They recover quickly from setbacks, don't fall apart when the going gets rough. **Can you accept strong criticism?**
9. Coachability – Winners respect the coach and the coaching process. They know that coaching is important to their development and progress as an athlete. They are receptive to the coach's advice and follow it. **Are you receptive to coaching?**
10. Conscientiousness – Winners have high standards of character. They have a deep sense of obligation, and know a team must have discipline to be successful. They put the welfare of the team first, and don't bend the rules to suit themselves. **How conscientious are you?**
11. Trust – Winners are believers. They accept people at face value, and know that mutual trust is a major factor in building team morale and unity. Trusting athletes communicate and cooperate better with their teammates and coach. **Do you trust other people?**

## Psychological Skills

In all the world, there is no one exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it. I own everything about me – my body, including everything it does; my mind, including all its thoughts and ideas; my eyes including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they may be - anger joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth, and all the words that come out of it, polite, sweet, or rough, correct or incorrect; my voice, loud or soft; and all my actions, whether they be to others and myself.

I own my own fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, and my fears. I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes. Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts.

I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests. I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me. However, I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at any given moment in time, is me. This is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time. When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting.

I can discard that which is unfitting, and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that, which is discarded. I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me. I own me, and therefore I can engineer me, I am me and I am okay.

- Virginia Satir

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# 1. Self - Awareness in Volleyball

“ Everything you say and do is a reflection of the inner you...”

How you think or perceive yourself as a person and a volleyball player is critical. Self - awareness is the skill of evaluating oneself honestly to determine an understanding of self or simply a recognition of your strengths and weaknesses, and your potential both as a person and as an athlete. AS we progress through the season hopefully you will understand that and believe that you are :

- a. Able to gain complete control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviors, provided you recognize these for what they really are - either a hindrance or one of help in the precise pursuit of your aspirations.
- b. Able to systematically create, as a consequence of this awareness, a plan to reach your potential, by programming and establishing routine behaviors.

Self - Awareness is the skill of understanding **who you are** as an athlete, and as a person, including your strengths and weaknesses. It is truly a unique skill, encompassing a conscious recognition of behaviors including attitudes, feeling, values, abilities, and physical traits. This may be the most important skill you will learn throughout your career. It is essentially the self - actualization of **Who You Are**, and every other skill we utilize has a direct correlation to this skill. As we progress through the stages of elite development a sound knowledge of our strengths and weaknesses will be critical to your development as a member of the Region 4 ADP program.

The next few pages contain exercises to help you discover some very good things about yourself, and perhaps some not so good things about yourself. But through these activities you will discover who you really are. Awareness will be reflected in your abilities to have faith in your skills. Conditioning, and competitive preparation so we can *perform* when it really counts.

“ The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking a new landscape but in having new eyes.”

- Marcel Proust

1. Preseason Questionnaire
2. Performance Profile – Best Player
3. Performance Profile - You

## Self-Awareness Considerations

- ❑ Self-awareness helps you learn who you are and to develop to your full potential (self-actualization).
- ❑ Develop openness to new experiences and ideas.
- ❑ The more constructs that you have available the better able you will be at predicting future behaviors or events.
- ❑ You need to learn and use your own valuing process to come to self-awareness rather than necessarily having one imposed upon you.
- ❑ Distortions of any kind are usually aimed at reducing or modifying a threat in some way and thereby prevent you from enjoying true self-awareness.
- ❑ You have the ability to solve your own problems. In resolving a problem you should look at the experience differently.
- ❑ People come to understand themselves better by disclosing themselves to others. Being aware and revealing things about yourself to people you believe can help you is very important to having a successful career.
- ❑ You can become better aware when you examine very closely your inner most thoughts, ideas, and intentions. You need to change the real self it is in conflict with the ideal, but first you will need to be aware of this discrepancy.
- ❑ At times take on the role of the coach; enter the head of the coach and observe yourself through the eyes of another.
- ❑ Aim to determine through performance profiling what constructs or components you use in your system of self-awareness. Are there many or are there few.
- ❑ Awareness can also be a critical negative factor when it leads to over analysis or incorrect focus.
- ❑ Awareness occurs best in the **here and** now. Have trust, let go, unleash and execute.

Your success comes down to how and what you think about yourself and your skills

To begin let us examine the **best** volleyball player and recognize her overall strengths and weaknesses. This is a very individual exercise as you all play very different positions...

ie. A libero will be different from a setter.

<p><b>Technical Strengths</b> ie. Reaches High for Spike</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9.</li> <li>10.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Tactical Strengths</b> ie. Is able to know opponents tendencies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9.</li> <li>10.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Physical Strengths</b> ie. Jumping Ability is 37"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9.</li> <li>10.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Mental Strengths</b> ie. Is not intimidated after getting blocked.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9.</li> <li>10.</li> </ol>

!!! The toughest competition you will ever face is staring at you in the mirror !!!

## Your Performance Profile

As an elite volleyball player, briefly describe and compare your current strengths and weaknesses, to your Ideal Volleyball Player Using the same headings: technical, physical, mental, and tactical. Compare yourself on a scale of 1-10 to the ideal player.

My Technical Strengths	My technical Weaknesses- Eg. Overhand Serve Toss.
My Physical Strengths	My Physical Weaknesses- Eg. Jumping Ability.

<p>My Tactical Strengths</p>	<p>My Tactical Weaknesses Eg. Recognizing the Hitters</p>
<p>My Mental Strengths</p>	<p>My Mental Weaknesses Eg. Pre-serve routine.</p>

*I shall engage in some inner shoveling  
in order to become a more competitive athlete !!!*

## 2. Goal Setting

"Excuse me sir," Alice inquires. "Could you tell me what road to take?" wisely, Caterpillar asks, "Where are you going? Somewhat dismayed, Alice responds, "Oh I don't know where I am going Sir." "Well," replied the caterpillar, "If you do not know where you are going, It really doesn't matter which road you take." - Alice in Wonderland – Lewis Carroll.

### Introduction

A **goal** is an end result or a specific aim that one pursues and expects to achieve following a carefully designed and set course of actions. We can liken the pursuit of excellence to a journey, and in order to complete that journey you require three basic elements – you must know where you are beginning, you must know where you want to go, , and you need a sound and efficient means of getting there.

We have already discussed our beginning point in Self Awareness, a sound efficient means of getting there can refer to our trained bodies, and the end point are the goals that we set. Once these are all in place we can design a program in order to get our trained bodies to the end result.

**Sports Greatest Dilemma...** Athletes traditionally believe WINNING is the most important goal

As we will see there are two considerations for your goals:

- i. *Performance* – Centers around the process of performance, increasing perceived awareness of ability, and mastering new tasks or skills, and improving new ones.
- ii. *Outcome* – Centers around the success or failure in terms of the final result seeking to prove ability. Mainly concerned with winning / losing to perceive ability.

There are also two types of goals:

- i. Long Term – Dream long term goals, can take up to years to reach
- ii. Short term – Can be as long as a year or as short as one skill.

The key is to utilize both for motivation. A key concept is that your short-term goals should put you closer to reaching your long-term goals. For example, if a long-term dream goal is to be able to spike serve by the time you reach university, a short-term goal may be to master a controlled toss by grade 10.

Characteristics of a successful goal setting program:

1. Goals must be specific – Specificity of the goal is crucial.
2. Goals must be realistic – The goal must be reachable.
3. Goals must be flexible – be flexible as some goals are only partially controllable.
4. Goals must be **WRITTEN DOWN** – It is easy to lose focus and forget.

The following pages will give us a great introduction to the goal setting process. As we have discovered in our awareness exercises we can use our goals to help reach our desired level of competency. On the next page are some considerations for you to consider as you move through this process.

## Goal Setting Considerations

- ❑ Goal setting is a self-motivating process that you can truly control to help you prepare and execute your desired performance while at the same time providing you with direction.
- ❑ Learn the skill of goal setting and use it not only to help you in training and competition but also as a significant life skill.
- ❑ Make a habit of setting one small goal each practice. Monitor it and evaluate as to whether you accomplished it or not. This is a solid 1<sup>st</sup> step
- ❑ Goals do not have to be only performance oriented. Try to focus on physical and mental skills. For example, try to think about a point of technique, especially when you are tired or in pain; to indulge in more positive self-statements while performing; to commit to new strategies; to take a calculated and well-rehearsed risk.
- ❑ Goal setting can also help you solve any realistic problems that may be festering as negative obstacles. Turn the obstacles around and express it as a positive goal statement. For example, "I will be more relaxed before competition."
- ❑ Always identify your goals in terms of specific activities that you can observe and monitor, measure and evaluate objectively. Once you reach your goals be sure to celebrate your success.
- ❑ Goals should be directed at changing your behavior. Only focus on yourself and what you can control. It is unlikely that you can control others, so don't dissipate your energies in the wrong direction.
- ❑ Try not to be too concerned with a focus on winning. Rather restrict your focus to the process of performance and the outcome will take care of itself.
- ❑ Goal commitment is vital. If you are insufficiently committed to attaining your goals, you will be less likely to put the required effort to reach them.
- ❑ Endeavor to be self-aware. Know all your strengths, Plan to systematically eradicate any obstacles in the path of your goal, one at a time.
- ❑ Set out your goals in some semblance of order or priority. These steps may help you achieve your mission statement by progressing up the ladder of manageable tasks.
- ❑ Be aware of the pressure that your goals might cause you especially as you come closer to the major competitions.
- ❑ Finally, goal setting requires practice just like any other skill. It takes time to master and you will need to be patient. Occasionally ask yourself if you are doing everything possible to reach your goals.

"A winner makes commitments to a goal – a loser only makes promises."

**Mission Statement:**

Our first step is to create our vision with a mission statement. It is a personal belief that explains why it is that you play volleyball. To give you a sense of purpose about what you can accomplish. It will require you to look deep inside yourself and ask the question " what do I think is possible as a competitive volleyball player if I commit myself to the utmost of my ability?(and even a bit beyond) Dream a little bit here ! !

I have included my own for an example...

***" It is not whether I win or lose, it is how my teams will play the game. If the training, progression, and game play, is at an elite level, then the winning or losing will take care of itself. "***

1. My mission statement is:

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2. My Performance Goals: ie. I will qualify for provincials by striving for perfection on every skill.

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3. My Technical Goals: i.e. I will add spike serve to my repertoire.

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4. My Mental Goals: ie. I will decrease my negative self – talk.

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5. My Tactical Goals: ie. I will cover my hitters every time.

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"Set your goals high, and don't stop till you get there..." - Bo Jackson

6. My Physical Goals: ie. I will increase my vertical jump by 10cm.

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7. My Behavior Goals: ie. I will set training goals EVERYDAY!!

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8. My Attitude Goals: ie. I will take one practice at a time and look for improvement.

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9. My Calculated Risk: (What do you intend to do to reach these goals?)

ie. I will complete the prescribed physical training.

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10. Obstacles that may prevent me from reaching these goals: ie. I have no skipping rope.

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11. What will I do to overcome these obstacles? ie. I will get a skipping rope.

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"The loftier your goals, the higher the risk, the greater your glory."

### 3. Self Talk

“ The only one who can tell you ‘ you can’t ‘ is you,  
and you don’t have to listen!! ”

Self - talk is the set of evaluating thoughts that you have when something is happening to you. It can be the little voice inside your head, or the verbal outbreak that everyone can hear. They can either be positive, rational, and constructive; or they can be negative and counterproductive. Negative self - talk can be devastating to our performance in all aspects of our lives, including school, volleyball, or our personal lives.

It is very important that as an elite athlete you become conscious of your customary self-statements. You may not realize that you are thinking negatively as it may have become habit. Crippling self-statements can destroy your self-image, confidence, and may change your attentional focus to irrelevant cues at the most critical time. Many elite volleyball players have reported that when they are performing to their best, they are actually unaware of any thoughts at all. Sometimes athletes think too much and engage in over analysis while performing. **Over thinking** occurs primarily because athletes have not yet learned to bring the conscious mind under control, or to recognize that there is a proper time and place to think about performance.

The key to mastering this phenomenon is to recognize these thoughts and the situations that bring them about. Once this is known we can develop a program to stop them and substitute positive thoughts in order to perform to our greatest potential.

## Self - Talk Considerations

- ❑ Be totally aware of your self-talk. You cannot take any positive steps to control negative or self-defeating self – talk that affects your performance unless you are intelligently aware of all aspects of self-communication. Test for the strengths or weaknesses of your self-talk.
- ❑ You should also be aware of what kind of thinking is helpful and what is harmful. In the event of the latter, it is important that you are **willing** to make changes or modifications.
- ❑ There is little place for dysfunctional thinking or negative self-statements in the port setting since they are ultimately the cause of excessive states of worry that detract from performance. Listen for them and deal with them promptly and effectively.
- ❑ Build tools that will help you develop your awareness and cognitively restructure your thoughts in such a way that they effectively enhance performance process. Just following some of these exercises will heighten your awareness.
- ❑ Positive self-statements should open the mind to acceptance. So do not sabotage them with resistance. The most effective affirmations are often those that occur spontaneously in your every day speech. They can be adjusted to give real meaning and they can also be very evocative.
- ❑ At first, aim to keep your revised self-talk or affirmations fairly general in nature before graduating to a more specific focus. The old program will question the new information.
- ❑ It is important that self-talk is verbalized very precisely so that it influences your moods and feelings and expected behaviors. It should be of high quality.
- ❑ Think and re-think, read and re-read positive self-statements until they become part of you. Once you have ingrained the new self-talk you will hear the new statements pitting themselves against the old and presenting you with a new perspective.
- ❑ Have your positive self-talk counterbalance and then replace any negative self-statements.
- ❑ You cannot hope to be perfect in everything you do. Avoid beating yourself up when things go wrong. Focus your attention on giving 100% effort each time you touch the ball. Be productive with your thoughts!
- ❑ State your revised or new thoughts or affirmations out loud to obtain a contracting effect. Say them convincingly and you will come to believe them more readily. Revised or new responses will require new cue words and plenty of practice.
- ❑ Emphasize and anticipate achievement, fun, excitement, and enjoyment and your self-talk will be all the more powerful. Once the new statements are implanted you will no longer believe that you have the ability to change.
- ❑ Set aside time in the day, before training or competition, or before going to bed at night when you rehearse your affirmations or revised self-talk. If you are doing everything possible to reach your goals.
- ❑ Remember: You need to be very conscious of what you say to yourself about yourself !!

The first step of this is to examine our traditional self talk patterns so that we may be aware of when and what we say to ourselves.

Please reflect carefully upon your current self-talk pattern:

When I Talk To Myself (In training or in Competition ) What Do I Tend To Say?

What kinds of things do you say myself ?

- When I perform Well:

- When I Perform Not So Well:

What Thoughts Go Through My Mind When I See A Particularly Hard Training Session?

How often do I talk to myself in training?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Always

How often do I talk to myself during competition?

Prior	1	2	3	4	5
During	1	2	3	4	5
After	1	2	3	4	5

What Do I Tend to Say When I Talk Myself Out of Doing Something In Training?

When I Use Self-Talk I Feel That I Am Setting Myself Up For Failure or Success?  
Please Comment:

I Know What I Say To Myself Affects the Way I Perform Because:

Now that you know how the things you say to yourself can affect your play we can decide on what has been good and what has been bad and hopefully by discovering these things we can get rid of the things that affect your performance. By reducing the instances where negative thoughts invade your mind we can then transplant positive thoughts into those now empty spaces therefore harnessing the positive emotions to become confident and successful.

Here is a chart we can use to identify situations that bring about the negative thoughts, what is said, what happens, what we want to happen, and a quick cue word(s) you can say to yourself to readjust your self-talk pattern. There are examples of cue word on the next page. Please fill it out truthfully and thoughtfully in order to create your own personalized self-talk pattern.

Scenario	Old Response	New Response	Cue Word
Ex. Serving @ 24-23	'I can't do this'..... Ball goes into net.	Deep breath, same routine, empty mind " serve to # 3"	"Routine"

Below is a collection of cue words that can be used in volleyball. Use them and create your own lexicon over time and use these cue words in a variety of contexts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Technique</i></b></li> </ul>	Feel: smooth: balance: stretch: stabilize: absorb: platform: firm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Speed</i></b></li> </ul>	Fast: explode: lunge: whip: go: fly: crisp: quick: uncoil.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Timing</i></b></li> </ul>	Feel: easy: smooth: pause: wait for it: catch up: together: even.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Strength</i></b></li> </ul>	Intense: force: powerful: push hard: flex: attack: whip.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Power</i></b></li> </ul>	Boom: blast: accelerate: bang: flow: coiled spring: panther.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Concentration</i></b></li> </ul>	Focus: refocus: reset: zoom in: zone in: filter: switch.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Emotional Control</i></b></li> </ul>	Aggressive: vigorous: aroused: motivated: relaxed: cool: optimistic: calm: composed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Persistence</i></b></li> </ul>	Hold on: hang in: process: effort: guts: patience: aggressive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Positive Words</i></b></li> </ul>	Great!: phenomenal: stupendous: magnificent: terrific: super: amazing.

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The power of negative thinking is the power to destroy.  
It causes you to operate from fear rather than from faith.

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## 4. Imagery

“He never blundered into victory, but won his battles in his head  
before he won them on the field”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Mental Imagery* is best defined as the experience of a movement or situation, created or recreated in an athlete's mind in the absence of the actual movement or situation and usually involves all five senses where applicable.

Mental Imagery is a very important skill to possess. It is your ability to produce a mental picture of something that is not actually present. To begin you must first understand that everything must be done successfully. Imagery, as with self-talk, can be negative as well. When imaging, perform every skill with the correct technique.

Which ever situation you are using it has been identified that for effective imagery it must follow several conditions:

- Vividness: A vivid image is one where the image is colorful, realistic, and utilizes all the senses
- Controllability: Control over the images means the ability to manipulate the image.
- Perspective: Deals with the your ' view ' of the image. It can be one of two ways:
  - a. As a fan in the stands... as if watching yourself on TV.
  - b. As if you are viewing it through your performance.
- Practice: If athletes consistently and repeatedly practice mental imagery and see themselves successfully achieving their goals it transfers from imagery to reality.
- Previous Experience: Experienced athletes gain more from imagery than beginners.
- Attitude and Expectation: The power of imagery is lost on the non-believer.
- Relaxed Attention: The mind should be relaxed when imaging. Reduction of external stimuli is a key component to the success of imagery.

We will be doing exercises throughout the program to enhance your imagery skills. We will perform it before practice and games as a way of preparing for the rigors of volleyball.

## Imagery Considerations

- ❑ Practice imagery skills regularly. It takes 10 to 12 weeks of practice before the full effects of imagery training are noticeable. As your skills develop you can practice in the face of different types of distraction.
- ❑ Imagery does not transform you into a better athlete overnight. However, it may encourage you to realize your goals.
- ❑ You need not only image ability but also the strong belief that imagery will help you in a variety of ways. The more *vivid* and *controllable* your images the more effective they will be.
- ❑ Be very conscious of your training or competitive environment – the facility layout, the line colors, the fans in the bleachers and so on. Creating a real experience using all modalities will improve the effectiveness of your imagery.
- ❑ Decide on the best perspective for you, whether internal or external, or a combination. The former, accentuating timing, may be more appropriate for you as a volleyball player.
- ❑ In your mind's eye, always imagine yourself executing the skill or strategy perfectly so that you take full advantage of your strengths. See yourself counter attacking!
- ❑ Use imagery training for five to ten minutes before and after training in the changing room, or in the gym; and endeavor to practice imagery techniques before you go to sleep.
- ❑ Develop and use triggers or cues that will help you create and initiate certain types of images for use in different situations.
- ❑ Use memory aids – physical objects, photographs, videotape, modeling or other movement experiences to help stimulate your imagery. It is difficult to visualize something you have never seen.
- ❑ You can create your own memory aids specific to your skills, abilities, and special needs.
- ❑ Imagine your match in its entirety and to its desired conclusion. This is best done in conjunction with a relaxation procedure. See yourself finishing the match, winning the match and receiving the gold medal.
- ❑ Be very precise in your imagery with awareness for real time and feel for correct movements. Actually feel the action in your muscles and experience all the emotions that are associated with your performance.
- ❑ Prepare through imagery training for all possible eventualities and both rehearse and see yourself coping effectively with success or failure.
- ❑ Always replace any mistakes or pauses with correct and continuous imagery.
- ❑ A strong imagination generates the actual event. Picture yourself performing successfully and you likely will.
- ❑ Develop the ability to create the inner theatre of your mind and see your future performances.

## The Imagery Exercise ( Self – Rating Scale )

You are asked to picture certain images. Rate your picture as follows

Very Clear	= 4
Moderately Clear	= 3
Fairly Clear	= 2
Unclear	= 1
Indiscernible	= 0

Instructions:

Read each item, close your eyes, picture the item and then record your own rating.

	<b>Rating</b>
1] Think about a very close friend (See him/her standing in front of you)	(     )
2] Imagine him or her laughing.	(     )
3] Picture his or her eyes.	(     )
4] Picture a Bowl of Fruit.	(     )
5] Imagine driving down a dusty road.	(     )
6] See yourself throwing a ball	(     )
7] Picture your schools gymnasium.	(     )
8] See a white sandy beach.	(     )
9] Imagine looking into a shop window	(     )
10] See a blank T.V. screen.	(     )
11] Imagine the sound of a barking dog.	(     )
12] Imagine the sound of the referee's whistle.	(     )
13] Feel the warmth of a hot shower.	(     )
14] Imagine feeling the texture of rough sandpaper.	(     )
15] Picture yourself lifting a heavy object.	(     )
16] Imagine yourself walking up a steep stairway.	(     )
17] Imagine the taste of lemon juice.	(     )
18] Think of eating ice cream.	(     )
19] Imagine the smell of cooking cabbage.	(     )
20] Imagine yourself smelling a rose.	(     )

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Scoring:        80 = VERY CLEAR (seen or smelt, or felt, or tasted, or experienced)  
                  60+ = WELL DEVELOPED POWERS OF IMAGERY  
                  30- = PROBLEMS WITH IMAGERY (needs work)

Here is a sample exercise. Find a quiet spot and give it a try !!

### **Exercise # 1 ( Seeing through Visualization )**

- Imagine the empty court without anyone on it .....
- Imagine a single volleyball sitting on the floor .....
- Imagine the team passing the ball in Warm-up using the drill 'pass n go' .....
- Imagine you are on the serving line, serving a ball .....
- Imagine you are in your position .....
- Imagine you are executing a perfect ' 3 ' pass .....
- Imagine sending a hard spike to the floor on the other side .....
- Imagine putting up the biggest stuff block .....

### **Exercise #2 ( Hearing through Visualization )**

- Imagine the sound of our team talking about the day while getting prepared .....
- Imagine the sound of the spectators .....
- Imagine the sound of the warm-up music .....
- Imagine the sound of the pre-game cheer .....
- Imagine the sound of the hitting warm-up .....
- Imagine the sound of your teammate calling a play .....
- Imagine the sound of the referee's whistle starting the play .....
- Imagine the sound of the whistle ending the play .....

### **Exercise #3 ( Feeling through Visualization )**

- Imagine the feel of the ball on your fingertips .....
- Imagine the feel of hitting the floor after a great dig .....
- Imagine the feel of a solid contact for a serve .....
- Imagine the feel of making a perfect pass .....
- Imagine the feel of ball on your fingertips making a perfect set .....
- Imagine the feel of jumping high and sending the ball to the floor .....
- Imagine the feel of shutting someone down with a massive stuff block .....
- Imagine the feel of the post point cheer.....

These exercises should be performed prior to the match... we will incorporate it into our pre game warm-up. It is of the utmost importance to utilize all three senses as they are the all important to the game of volleyball... SEE, HEAR, FEEL !!!

Always keep an open mind with imagery and if you feel like you need to add something to the routine please do so but remember to keep it positive !!! Imagery is very personal and each of you will be different...

## 5. Ideal Performance State

Mobilize your potential. Dare to dream and be bold in reaching your highest visions. Trust in your abilities and be quick to draw from those things you have done well in the past.

To achieve a level of success that includes winning championships and trophies one must be at the top of their game. The purpose of becoming proficient in a variety of skills is to help you positively and consistently prepare towards an *Ideal Performance State*. An **ideal performance state** refers to an optimal technical, physiological, psychological, and tactical level for maximizing competitive performance. Once our training has elapsed and the game is to start we must reach an "Ideal Performance State" in order to optimize all the elements from the four components. In a sense we work at reaching optimal levels in all four and to mesh them when the match is at hand is the key.

In order to mesh them, one must be in their 'IPS' for success to be had. IPS is described as being in total control, no worries and focused on the task at hand. In hopes of attaining this state all of our training will be geared to creating this state. In creating the climate to facilitate the IPS includes being physically and mentally relaxed and calm, excited but not overly anxious; it also means being energized, optimistic, alert, mentally focused, self-confident and in control. There are two steps to facilitate the creation of the IPS:

1. Self-Awareness – Knowing yourself and what your IPS feels like
2. Develop Performance Routines – Consisting of carefully planned series of physical and mental step designed to create, maintain, and readjust your IPS.

Routines are important as they:

- They help you to concentrate on the performance process more effectively.
- They help you control the thought processes and avoid over thinking.
- They help you focus on what they need to do and so reduce any distractions or interferences.
- They help you adopt a more consistent approach to performance both mentally and physically.
- They can help you boost your feelings of self – confidence precisely because they are in control.
- They will help you with the body – mind connection.
- Physical routines may offset any warm-up decrement.
- They may put to good use down times or waiting periods.
- They may keep mental activity away from negative self – talk which in turn leads to excessive worry.
- Well-practiced routines may condition the body and mind into feeling that this is just another match and so keep things in perspective for you.

## IPS Considerations

- ❑ Start by closely examining what it is that you really think, feel, and do prior to competition. If you have created strategies that work all well and good. If not, set about creating routines that will help you reach your IPS consistently.
- ❑ If you don't feel psyched up for the competition then start acting as if you do. Change the thoughts and the feelings and behaviors may change to.
- ❑ Start with simple routines and strategies. You can develop to more complex routines with experience and when the skills become automatic.
- ❑ Regularly practice your routines in low stressful situations until they become automatic or are absorbed as an integral part of your competitive preparations.
- ❑ Trust in yourself and be patient in pursuing what works for you. Routines take time to create. There are no short cuts. Be patient and persevere.
- ❑ Use routine or strategy planning sheets to help you design, develop, and refine your performance plans. Always include alternatives and be flexible in your approach.
- ❑ Take responsibility for monitoring and assessing your routines. Take direct control of the process and practice reading your IPS every time you compete. There may be differences in approach depending on the importance of the competition.
- ❑ The higher the level of competition the more specific and detailed the routines need to be. However as your experience develops, pare down your plans to meaningful cue words. The process is dynamic.
- ❑ Use the personalized cue words as activity reminders particularly towards the end of competition when fatigue sets in and interferes with execution of the skills.
- ❑ Persist if you have trouble triggering the desired thoughts, feelings, or images. Remember that you didn't learn your physical skills in one day. Stay with the process and practice in a committed way.
- ❑ Always discuss your routines with your coach. Look for input and advice especially in the developing stages of your athletic career. Make adjustments if necessary.
- ❑ You will perform well in a pressure situation when you can maintain your IPS. Remember that pressure is something you tend to put on yourself.
- ❑ Aim to indulge in clear and focused thinking about your IPS. You need to confidently compensate and refine your mental skills to meet differing demands.

To begin, mentally recall your best ever volleyball performance:

Major Competition: _____ Date: _____											
Place: _____											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect back on this competition where you did your best performance. How ready did you believe you were at the moment? Rate yourself below:</li> </ul>											
State of Readiness	Ready/Activated						Ready/Unenergized				
Physically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Technically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Mentally	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Tactically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
How did you feel prior to the crucial game ?											
What were you saying to yourself just before this game?											
Before this performance:											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were you clear about your goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Did you believe you could achieve you goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Did you imagine yourself achieving these goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Were you worried or stressed? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> </ul>											
How were you focused during this game? What were you paying attention to?											
What did your coach do or say prior to this performance to help get you into the ' Zone'?											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Helped?</li> </ul>											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Hindered?</li> </ul>											

Now recall your less than best performance:

Major Competition: _____ Date: _____											
Place: _____											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect back on this competition where you did your best performance. How ready did you believe you were at the moment? Rate yourself below:</li> </ul>											
State of Readiness	Ready/Activated							Ready/Unenergized			
Physically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Technically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Mentally	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Tactically	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
How did you feel prior to this performance ?											
What were you thinking or saying to yourself shortly before the performance?											
Before this performance:											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were you clear about your goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Did you believe you could achieve you goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Did you imagine yourself achieving these goals? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> <li>Were you worried or stressed? <span style="float: right;">Yes                      No</span></li> </ul>											
How were you focused during this game? What were you paying attention to?											
What did your coach do or say prior to this performance to affect your mental readiness?											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Helped?</li>     <li>What Hindered?</li> </ul>											
What were the major differences between your thinking and feeling prior to these two performances?											

Now that we have identified what it is like to be in our Ideal Performance State we can devise a plan to get us into that zone every time, identifying the things that make the zone possible and re create them during our competitions.

Devising a Pre Performance Routine:

This is your routine to use before every competition. These actions will allow you to create the circumstances in which you will reach your IPS.

Actions/Thoughts

Cue Words

Night before the competition:

- Mentally:

- Physically:

Morning of the competition:

- Mentally:

- Physically:

During the Preparatory Period:

- Mentally

- Physically

There are certain times during the match where a pre... routine is necessary. Use this sheet to develop a pre performance routine for each of these scenarios. One must go through these steps every time in order to be successful.

Actions/Thoughts

Cue Words

Pre Serve Routine

Server:

Blockers:

Setters:

Pre Serve Receive Routine

Passers:

Setters:

Hitters:

“ Never walk up to the starting line with thoughts of coming in second !! ”

## 6. Motivation

Motivation is a very important and all encompassing concept in volleyball. It is a driving force that initiates, directs, and sustains behavior. As an athlete it means having reasons for changing behaviors, attitudes and relationships specifically in the pursuit of excellence. Motivation is an enhancing as well as an ongoing process, which requires careful consideration, planning and attention.

Basically, motivation is important to:

- Learn and consolidate skills
- Condition both the body and mind
- Prepare for optimal performance
- Improve the quality of performance

There are two basic types of motivation:

1. Intrinsic Motivation – behaviors that the athletes engage in for their own sake and satisfaction is derived from their performance. The inner driving forces that move the athlete into engaging in tasks for their own sake rather than material rewards or other outside influences. (parents, coaches, money)
2. Extrinsic Motivation – The driving forces that move an athlete to engage in activities for the sake of outside influences. Striving for things such as status, fame, recognition, awards, payments, winning, looking good in front of people, pleasing their parents, etc.

**Intrinsic Motivation** involves:

- Increases in: Feelings of enjoyment, interest, competence, self esteem, self confidence, flow, success rate, and goal directed behaviors, excited involvement in the process vs the outcome.
- Decreases in: Competitive anxiety states, possibility of choking, ego involvement, perceived failure.

The availability of rewards is infinite, inexhaustible and open to all athletes.

**Extrinsic Motivation** involves:

- Increases in: Competitive anxiety states, possibility of choking, perceived failed performance, focus on outcome, self imposed pressures, reliance on external factors.
- Decreases in: Self motivation, fun and enjoyment, self satisfaction, persistence and effort, attentional control.

The availability of reward is finite, exhaustible and available only for some (winners)

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Doing your best is more important than being the best.

-- Shannon Miller "

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## Motivation Considerations

- ❑ Although it may not be possible for you to commit to winning matches all the time, you should try to be committed to personal excellence, always striving to be the best you can be.
- ❑ Achievement is not the only goal. You can be motivated by the sheer joy of the mental and physical feelings of well being in addition to the sense of superiority.
- ❑ When left to your own devices, be careful not to follow the line of least resistance. Aim to develop your self-discipline and work to the maximum that is required. There are no short cuts to success.
- ❑ Develop a sense of loyalty and obligation to the program, the coach and to your fellow athletes. Use their efforts to help you motivate yourself especially when the training is difficult.
- ❑ Accept all feedback as *informational* in the conviction that it will positively motivate you to be better, rather than incessantly viewing it as criticism.
- ❑ Be prepared to examine your participation motives even though they may change and fluctuate over the course of your athletic development. They will help you to determine your goals and give you the necessary drive.
- ❑ Finding a meaning and purpose to your athletic involvement and working hard to achieve meaningful goals brings its own reward.
- ❑ There is never any disgrace in losing or failing to do your best when you genuinely tried. The disgrace comes should you reach a point of indifference. That is, how you perform, win or lose, does not matter anymore.
- ❑ You will find it difficult to increase your motivational levels if you are too serious or too tense. Other problems will be allowed to emerge and you will burn out. Know your anxiety levels and how to deal with them effectively.
- ❑ You will be expected to work at your own motivation levels at various times throughout the season. Cooperate with the coach, and share the leadership load with your fellow athletes.
- ❑ Try not to be stubborn, especially when it is necessary to confront the coach with your problems. Rather look for compromising ground where both you and your coach can win.
- ❑ Judge yourself how much effort or work you must invest in order to do well. Look at your existing level of commitment and determine if these two factors add up.
- ❑ Although actually winning tournaments may provide you with concrete evidence of your ability, it is really your level of effort that is the true indicator. Always aim to compete with the same intensity no matter your position in the tournament.
- ❑ Motivate yourself to do everything in your power to win and within the boundaries of fair play.
- ❑ Anyone can lose. Concentrate your efforts on overcoming any fear of losing.
- ❑ Watch, listen and ask questions. Not only will you learn, but also being inquisitive keeps your motivational levels high so you never tire of what you have to do.
- ❑ Stay refreshed by trying new ideas. Stick with them until they work. Innovations need time and they only work with commitment and effort.
- ❑ Develop the desire to expand your horizons and try new techniques. Endeavor to take calculated risks, to change aspects of your performance process in an attempt to bring greater enjoyment and satisfaction.

## 7. Relaxation

Relaxation is a significant skill and concept in volleyball. One's ability to play while remaining relaxed during key moments can be the decisive difference between average performances and great performance. The mind, especially when it is over-aroused to the point of experiencing states of unpleasantness, can directly affect physical condition by causing the body to release certain chemicals that disrupt the body's balance. Any excessive imbalance may cause you to produce and uncoordinated performance, and narrow or widen your concentration causing you to cue into irrelevant cues. Excessive stress or pre-competitive anxiety can be effectively controlled by a variety of relaxation techniques.

- **Somatic Anxiety**- refers to the physiological responses to stress. High somatic anxiety is counterproductive and will interfere with your control, accuracy, finesse, and focusing. This type of anxiety usually includes things like insomnia, profuse sweating, constant complaining, vomiting and upset stomach, increased heart rate & breathing, etc.
- **Cognitive Anxiety**- refers to the excessive negative concerns about the pending performance that result in undue worry or increased self-doubt. It can persist or fluctuate between better and worse states throughout the competition. May result in a loss of concentration or narrowing of focus, and may bring about a negative preoccupation with what you cannot do rather than what you can. As a consequence, actions or movements lose their flow and are no longer automatic. Symptoms of this anxiety include: Self doubt, worry, loss of focus, fear of failure, mood changes, staleness, lack of commitment lethargy, etc.

It is important that you are aware of these concepts as they relate to your own situations, and be able to properly address them in order to maintain IDEAL PERFORMANCE STATES and perform at the greatest possible levels.

### Types of Relaxation

- i. *Total or Complete*: as the name suggests it is total or complete relaxation. Usually is done for a period of 20-30 minutes and is useful in a number of different situations:
  - A. Immediately following very intense training.
  - B. When you are in a state of fatigue or exhaustion.
  - C. Excessively worried or apprehensive.
  - D. Athletes are sick or injured.
  - E. Athletes are experiencing emotional stress.
  - F. Between competitions (preliminaries and finals)

To relax completely is an opportunity to increase awareness of both mental and physical responses and to recognize how interconnected these really are. Should produce feelings of calmness, serenity, peace, etc. It is essential to provide the nervous system a chance to rest and regenerate.

- ii. *Momentary or Temporary*: Usage of this type when there is little time to relax but needs this time to effectively take control. Useful in a number of situations:
  - A. Just before you execute a specific skill or task – eg. Serving
  - B. When you are over-aroused or experiencing feelings of tightness
  - C. Experiencing the occurrence of worry or anxiety
  - D. When you feel imbalanced
  - E. Subjected to certain stressful situations before during, after, competition.

To be able to quickly and effectively resort to brief relaxation procedures in a moment of significance is an important skill that needs to be learned and applied regularly in a variety of appropriate settings.

## Relaxation Considerations

- ❑ Recognize those early symptoms that indicate the possible onslaught of excessive states of anxiety before during and after a competition.
- ❑ Be conscious of your optimum levels of arousal, activation or states of readiness that reflect your IDEAL PERFORMANCE STATES.
- ❑ Draw upon and learn from previous experiences and try to understand what to expect in terms of your own responses in the competitive situation. This may help you to take control of your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as they emerge in stressful settings.
- ❑ Focus on doing your best... Sometimes you may find yourself worrying about those things you cannot really control. Reduce your fears of the unknown by only concentrating upon:
  - What you can control
  - What you need to do
  - What you can do
  - What you are good at doing
- ❑ Use thought or cue words to control any excessive states of anxiety, Ideally these thought or cue words should trigger the feelings of calmness and control, confidence and an eagerness to perform to your best. Develop some suitable cue words for your own use.
- ❑ Focus on stress or anxiety states as something positive. For instance, they can be viewed as indicators of states of competitive readiness. Positive stress can activate or energize you and can stimulate you as you prepare for your performance.
- ❑ Avoid all negative thoughts. These can only lead to an inappropriate attention and poor decisions. Always be prepared to substitute positive thoughts for negative ones. It is difficult to avoid anxiety states but it is possible to manage them to your advantage.

Successful people are able to rise above crises by relaxing no matter what the external situation.

Their belief in themselves, the strength of their self-image is impenetrable armor, which protects them against shattering events.

– Maxwell Maltz

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Emotional Control Exercise

Anxiety States

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This exercise is designed to help create an awareness of some of the sources of tension you typically experience in competitive volleyball. Identify 4-5 situations that cause you to experience stress or anxiety in training or more especially before, during, after a competition. Rank in order these situations so that #1 is the situation that causes you the greatest anxiety. Please give your reasons and describe the resulting effects. You will need to identify those things or situations that actually cause you to become over-anxious.

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Rank ( ) Situation:

Reasons for anxiety increase:

How this affects your volleyball:

---

Rank ( ) Situation:

Reasons for anxiety increase:

How this affects your volleyball:

---

Rank ( ) Situation:

Reasons for anxiety increase:

How this affects your volleyball:

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Rank ( ) Situation:

Reasons for anxiety increase:

How this affects your volleyball:

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Rank ( ) Situation:

Reasons for anxiety increase:

How this affects your volleyball:



## *Controlled Breathing Techniques*

### Step 1 – Learning to Control Breathing

- Find a quiet place where you can stand, sit, or lie down for about 15-20 minutes each day and especially for the next week or so until you are accustomed to the exercise. Preferably lie down and make yourself comfortable.
- When you are at ease and are breathing normally, clear your mind and focus only on your breathing pattern (how often and how deeply you breath). Remember any effort to relax may only result in tension. This would be counter productive. Breathe through your nose.
- Two prevailing thoughts should enter your mind now... BREATHE IN ... BREATHE OUT. Do not pay attention to any other thoughts. Just let them pass by. Relax all the muscles as you breathe in deeply.
- Think only about the first phase of the breathing process, inhalation. Take a deep breath, but don't exhale right away. Hold this breath and notice the tension that it causes in the rest of your body. Breathe out and repeat this at least two more times.
- Concentrate now on the second phase of the process, exhalation. Tense the muscles and gradually or forcibly squeeze all the air out of your lungs. As you breathe out experience in your body a sinking sensation. Make sure you exhale completely and while exhaling feel yourself getting heavier and heavier. Do not fight this feeling, just go with it.
- As you progress, try to slow down your breathing rate. Make each breath last as long as you feel comfortable. As you breathe in, imagine a big pink balloon getting progressively larger. As you exhale, imagine that same balloon, getting progressively smaller, while you begin to feel heavier and heavier.
- Continue with this exercise until you feel completely relaxed. Breathing exercises can help clear the lungs, refresh the respiratory system, and strengthen the abdominal muscles and the lungs.

### Step 2 – Breath Control at the Competition Site

Now that you feel comfortable controlling your breathing patterns in a relaxed situation you should take the next step and practice this process at the competition site when you need to relax. You will certainly need to use controlled breathing techniques prior to your match or training.

- Once you have warmed up or immediately before a match notice your breathing patterns. Are they too fast and shallow or deep and slow?
- While awaiting your match and particularly when standing at the endline take a couple of fairly deep breaths focusing on the exhale phase. Using cue words such as "relax", "let go" or "loose" or even just sighing during the exhalation phase will help you really loosen up.
- If you feel too relaxed then take a few quick and forceful breaths to energize yourself.
- The more efficient you become at breathing control, the fewer the number of breaths you will find it takes to initiate the relaxation response.

**" THE BEST INSPIRATION IS NOT TO OUT DO OTHERS BUT TO OUT  
DO YOURSELF !!"**

Scenario	Somatic Effects	Negative Thoughts	Negative External Responses	Somatic Responses	Cognitive Restructuring	Behavior Modification
Bad Referees call	- Muscles tense, elevated HR, sweating	- Disbelief, internal dialogue, feelings of desperation, refs on their side, I'm going to fix it on next swing	- Begging for changed call, verbal reactions, body language, forgetting our position on the floor	- Deep breathing - Narrow focus onto server - Concentrate on ball	- I've prepared to score 27 or more pts. - I new this would happen nobody wants us to win	- Raise hand and say good call - Get team together for a cheer
Getting Slammed	- Elevated HR, muscles tense, light-headed, feel weak, no blood in head, heart in throat	- Disbelief, got lucky, internal dialogue, swing harder next time	- Give me ball again, hang head, go to corner, no eye contact with team or hand touch	- Deep breath - Shake out legs - Circle neck	- Why did he block me? - See block, use block, stay aggressive	- Turn to teammates - Head up, eye contact, positive FB to setter
Crowd Distractions	- Nervousness, jittery, broad external focus, loss of focus	- Center of attention, I'm being noticed, that trash talker is awful, I'll show them,	- Acknowledge them, talk back, try harder (play outside abilities)	-	- Good they notice me I must be playing good - I've been trashed before..... it doesn't work	- Stay within abilities, come into group for support, move on from mistakes (body language)
Playing against trash talkers & cocky players	- Embarrassment, tentativeness, self-awareness of abilities (thinking of skill execution)	- F#\$% you buddy, what are you talking about, I wanna pack him, I'm going to roof him on next play	- Show them that you notice (eye contact, gestures), trash talk back, give our momentum to them after a play by gesturing etc.	-	- Is someone talking?, I won't play that game I will just play my game.	- Turn to team, talk LOUDER about next play (i.e. call out hitters), keep energy on our side
Other team goes on a run of 4 or more points (Tough spin server)	- Nervousness, anxious, Tentative, elevated HR, shallow breathing	- Disbelief, internal dialogue, come on so and so, were going to lose, go inside cognitive shell	- Showing frustration, anger, going into shell, avoiding teammates, try to do it all yourself,	-	- Be patient, one pass, on time, strong approach, smart shots, a "2"	- Come into middle, stall for time, change SR, KISS it
Feeling Lethargic	- Legs heavy, no spring, muscle soreness, tunnel vision, broad vision	- I can't jump, I can't stay low, my feet are slow, I'm not getting to the ball,	- "show it" in your body language, slouching, letting balls drop, getting to ball late, sloppy ball handling	- Quicker breathing, get a sweat going, stretch, be vocal	- I've been more tired, this is nothing like 99 up, I am still jumping & moving as fast as usual	- Move into position fast, add energy between plays with communication, keep your mind occupied with task-relevant cues
Pain from Injury	- Feeling the pain, muscle weakness, joint pain, limited ROM	- I can't jump or move, my pain is the reason I didn't execute	- Show someone your in pain, saying "I Can't"	-	- It's not doing permanent damage, I'm fine, 1 match/set	- Go all out for every ball
Team Missing Serves	- Tentativeness, nervousness, elevated HR, anxious, rushed	- I can't miss... The player before me missed her....	- Anger, bad body language, let them go to corner on own, verbal reactions	- Serving routine, focus, key words, deep breath	- I can make this serve, Good toss, solid contact, focus on ball	- Touch hand, sideout, we will work harder now
Making an error	- Embarrassment, elevated HR, muscles tighten	- Internal dialogue, I don't want to touch ball,	- Showing your frustration or tentativeness, scared look, playing tentative, going into "shell"	- Deep breath, shake out tension	- Key words, positive affirmations, happy place	- Touch hands with teammates, same emotion, look & act confident



