

PERFORMANCE REHEARSAL

Performance Rehearsal utilizes the power of visual imagery to **mentally rehearse** and prepare for any potentially stressful situation, such as speaking in public, preparing for and taking an exam, writing a paper, competing in an athletic event, going to a social activity or on a date, or dealing with conflict in a relationship.

Benefit

Mental rehearsal in a relaxed state helps to condition the mind to remain calm and focused and the body to respond with better precision and skill, increasing the ability to be one's best in any situation, including more easily overcoming problems that arise.

Choose an upcoming performance, event, activity, situation, or daily task for which a) Anxiety or stress keeps you from doing or being your best **and/or** b) You want to improve your performance or change your behavior.

Technique:

1. Use any method of deep relaxation that works for you. It can be helpful to become relaxed enough that your subjective level of stress is around 2 on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 feeling no stress and 10 feeling the most stressed.
2. Vividly remember a time you performed well that is similar to the upcoming performance, event, or situation you have chosen to focus on. Notice the feelings of confidence, competence, and accomplishment you felt at that time. Notice the attitudes that helped you achieve it and how your hard work paid off. Take time to really remember and memorize those good feelings.
3. Keep those same attitudes and feelings with you as you visualize the event or situation you have chosen to focus on for this exercise. Vividly imagine yourself calmly and confidently preparing for and approaching the event, situation, or task in the way you want to, seeing yourself feeling and acting your best and performing as you want to. Take time to imagine this fully and completely. Notice details like the setting, people, words spoken, tasks, dangers, etc. See yourself in control, performing your very best, acting and responding in a genuine way, respecting others as well as yourself, expressing your own ideas and opinions clearly, handling disagreements and differences calmly and effectively, and being successful at whatever tasks you need to do.
4. If visualizing the situation brings up anxious feelings, repeat the deep relaxation exercise until you again feel calm and then return in your mind to the event or situation. Repeat as many times as needed to feel calm and confident as you visualize the event or situation.

More Information

Confident Performance Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQ5TuNoZ8Wk>

Mental Rehearsal <http://www.yogachicago.com/may08/mentalrehearsal.shtml>