



**HIGH PERFORMANCE
& DEVELOPMENT**

Mental Toughness

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Overview

I. Introduction to Mental Toughness

II. Six Important Skills to Develop Mental Toughness

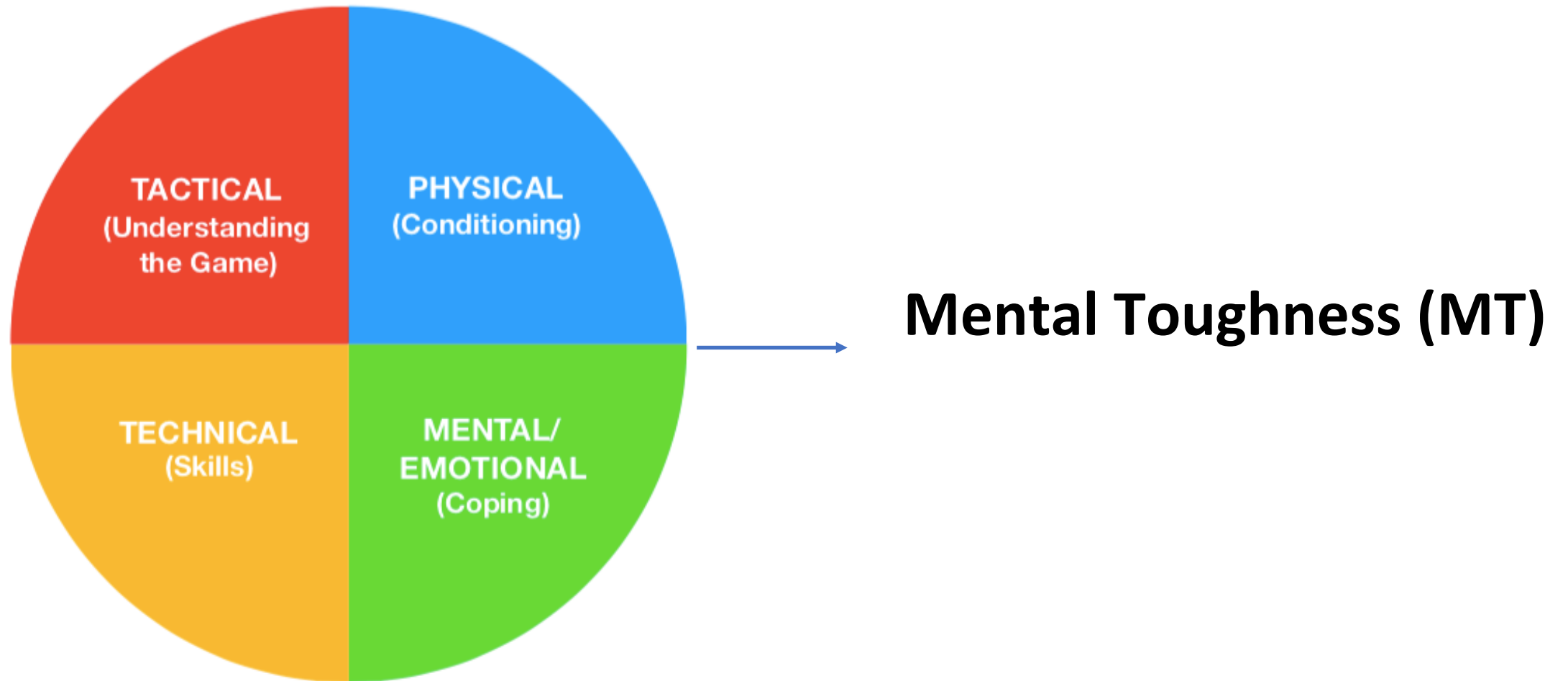
1. Motivation
2. Coping with pressure
3. Believe in yourself (self-confidence)
4. Optimal energy level
5. Focus (Concentration)
6. Recovery

III. Four Techniques to Develop Mental Toughness

1. Goal Setting
2. Visualization - See It to Be It
3. Self-talk
4. Breathing

IV. Recommended Reading and Videos

Performance Wheel





Mental Toughness

Mental Toughness (MT) is a psychological edge that helps you to cope better during competition, training and life to be more consistent, focused, and confident and ultimately, better than your opponents under pressure. MT also allows you to bounce back quickly after challenges and setbacks.



Mental Toughness

- Coping skills (stress management etc.)
- Emotional reactivity
- Psychological skills (self-confidence, focus, stamina, resilience etc.)
- Ability to perform under pressure

Gucciardi, D. & Gordon, S. (Eds.), (2011). *Mental toughness in sport: developments in theory and research*. London: Routledge. Loehr, J. E. (1986). *Mental toughness training for sports: Achieving athletic excellence*. Lexington, MA: Stephen Green Press. Sheard, M. (2013). *Mental toughness: the mindset behind sporting achievement, 2nd ed.* London: Routledge.



Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

- Fixed mindset



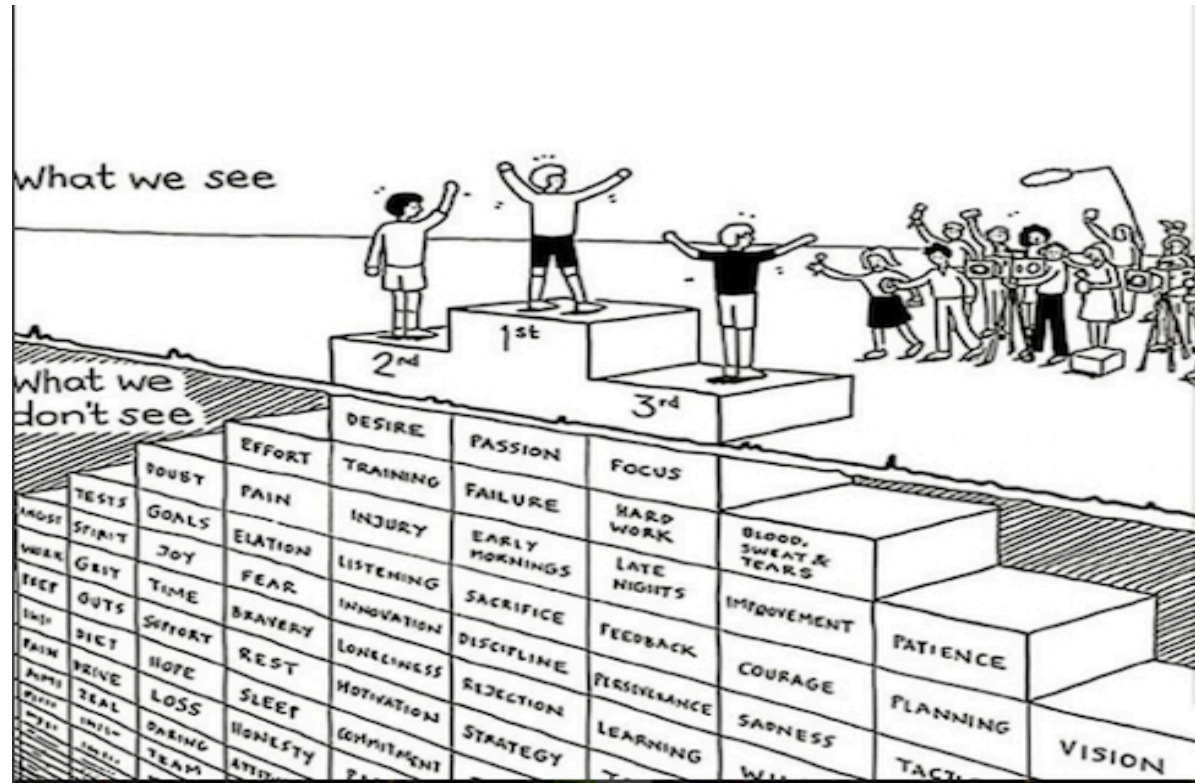
Talents and abilities can not be developed

- Growth mindset



Talents and abilities can be developed

Winning is not coming from talent or luck it is the result of preparation and skills building in a long period of time.





Mental Toughness can be learned!

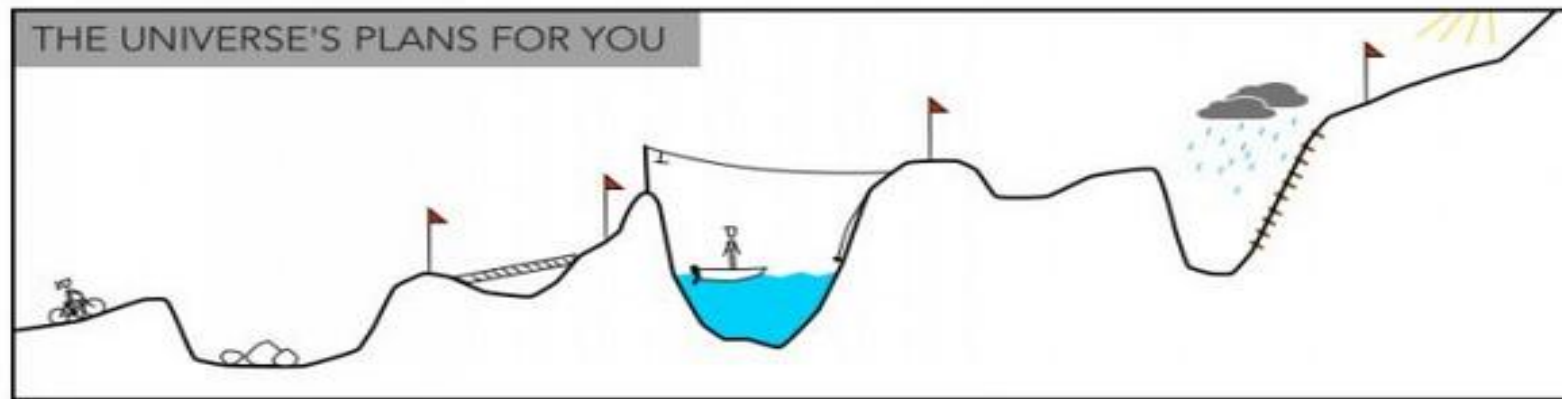
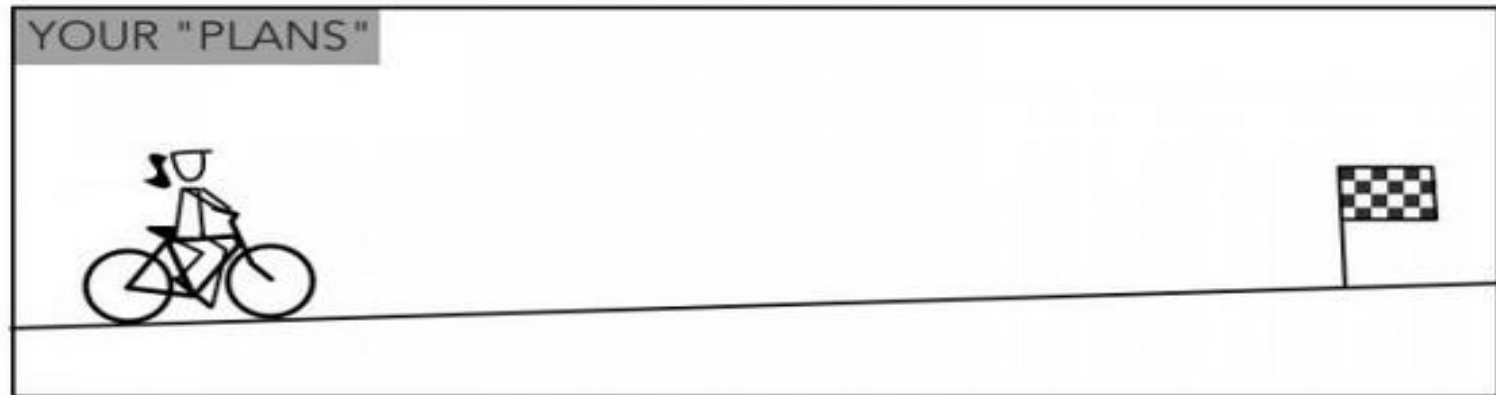


Six Important Skills to Develop Mental Toughness



1. MOTIVATION

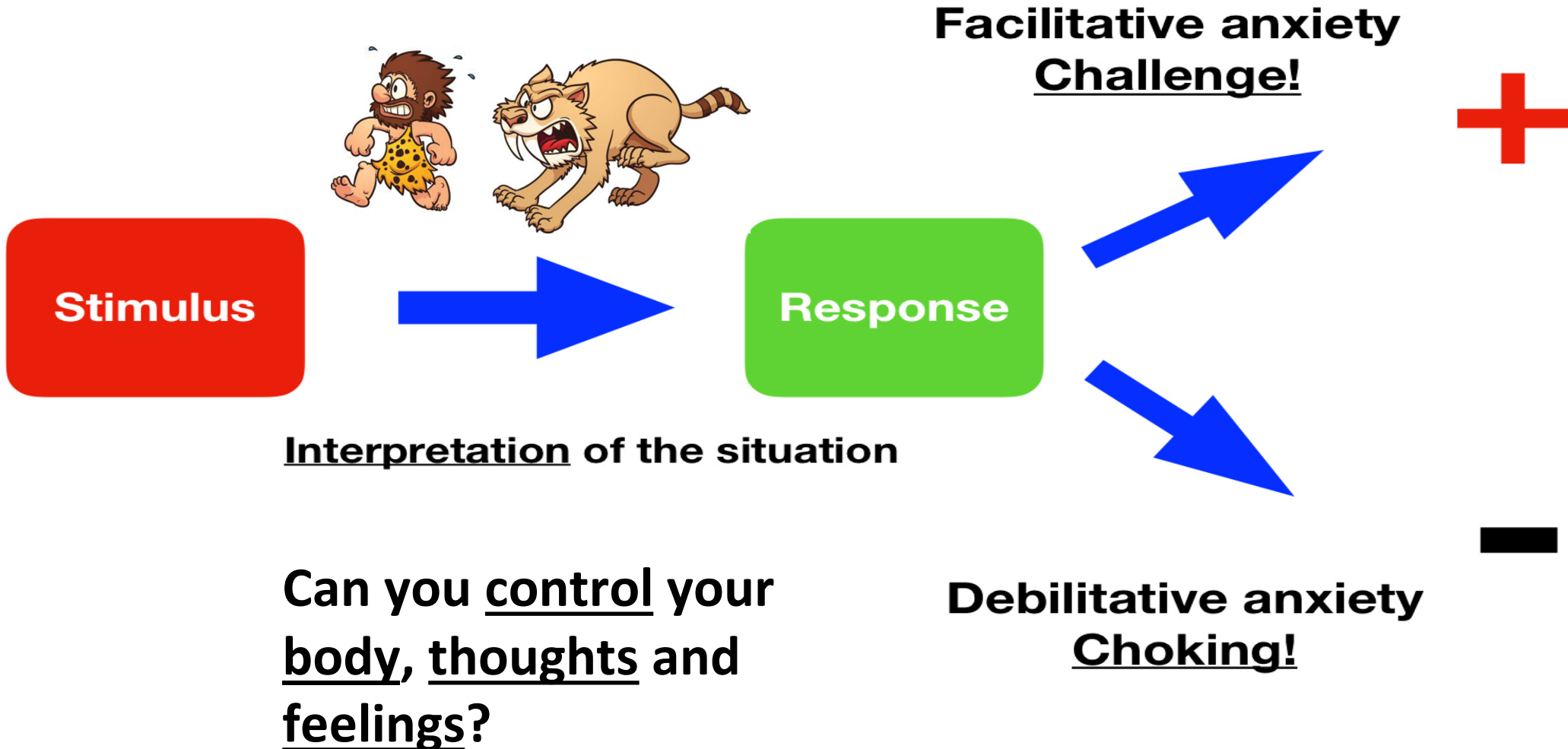
Keep your motivation in long term that helps you to keep going in the most difficult times, and adapt and learn new skills.



DOGHOUSE DIARIES

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2. COPING WITH PRESSURE

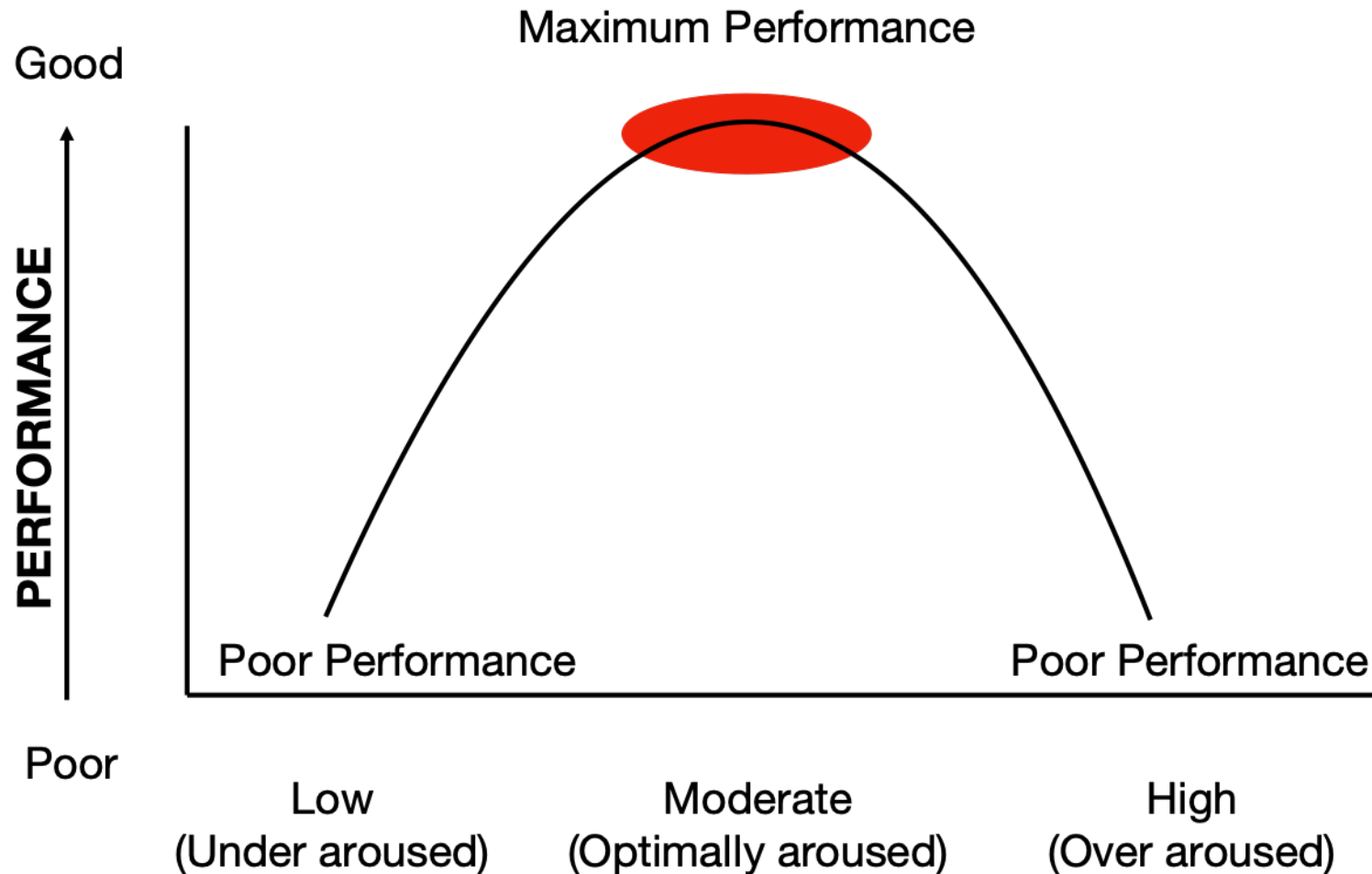




3. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF (SELF-CONFIDENCE)

- Number one attribute that elite athletes cited for mental toughness was self-belief in their abilities.
- What you believe yourself to be will effect everything you do.
- You need to think and act like a champion.

4. OPTIMAL ENERGY (AROUSAL CONTROL)



5. FOCUS (CONCENTRATION)

Focus is a learned skill, which means paying attention to the relevant stimuli and ignoring the irrelevant, being in the here and now, in the present (not in the past or the future). What situations do you lose focus?

DISTRACTIONS:

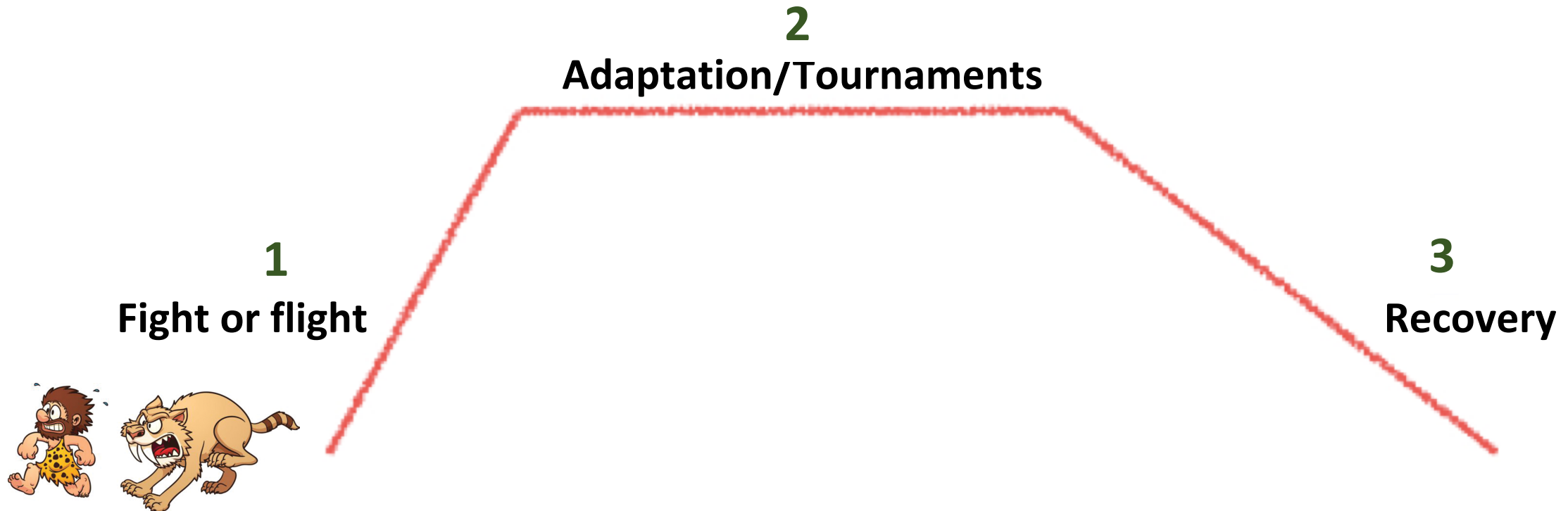
WITHIN MY CONTROL:

OUT OF MY CONTROL:

Always focus on what you can control!

6. RECOVER QUICKLY

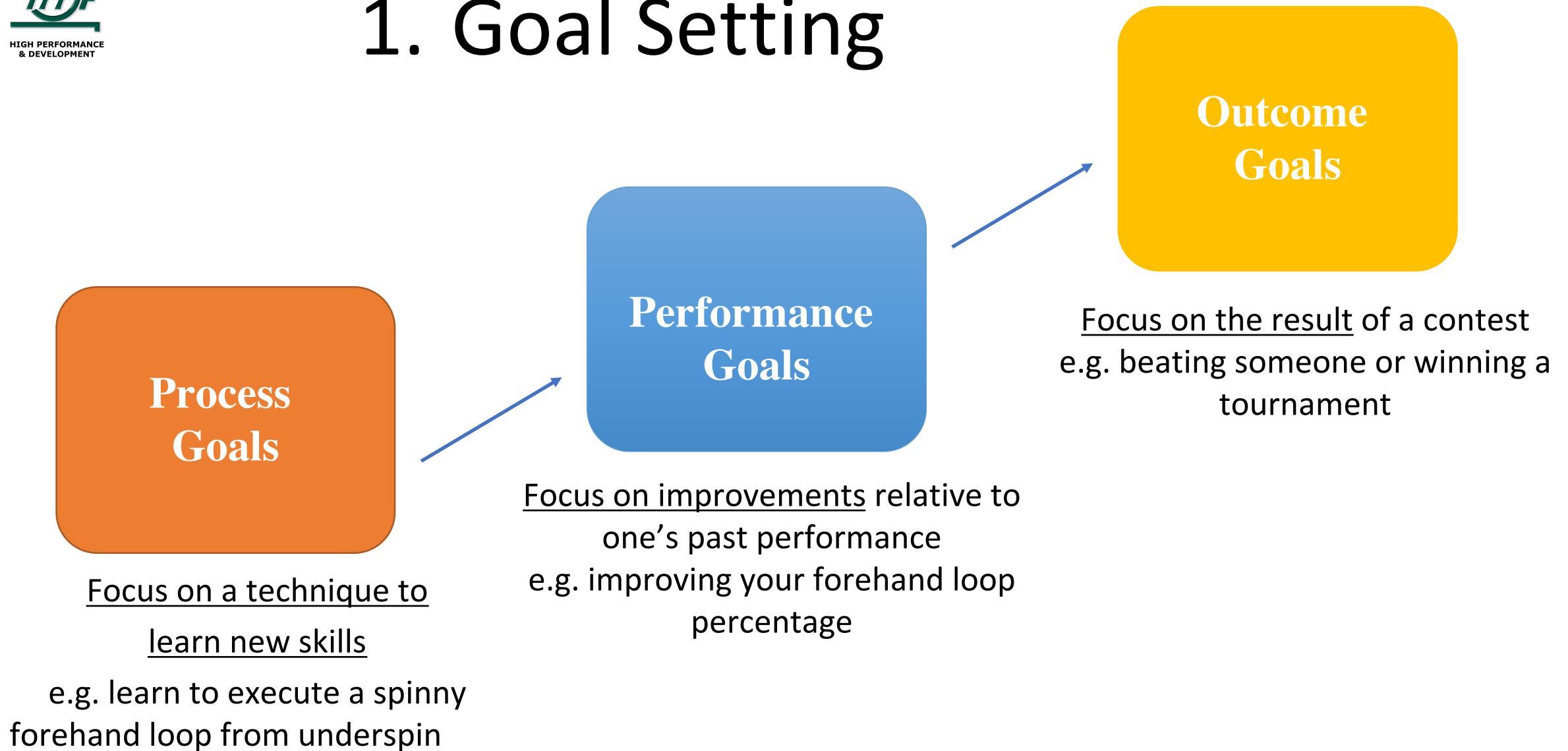
- Celebrate success, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them










Four Techniques to Develop Mental Toughness

1. Goal Setting



SMART

Goal Setting

SPECIFIC 	MEASURABLE 	ADJUSTABLE 	REALISTIC 	TIME-BASED 
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Set daily and weekly goals as stepping stones to your long term goals.

My goal:

Due date:

Action steps to reach my goal (baby steps toward my goal)



2. Visualization See It To Be It!



- Use visualization (mental rehearsal) as a pre-performance routine.
- Pre-performance routines are physical rituals or thought patterns that you do consistently right before or a day before your match or important event.
- Visualization helps to:
 - manage stress level
 - increase confidence
 - increase concentration
 - increase overall performance



2. Visualization See It To Be It!



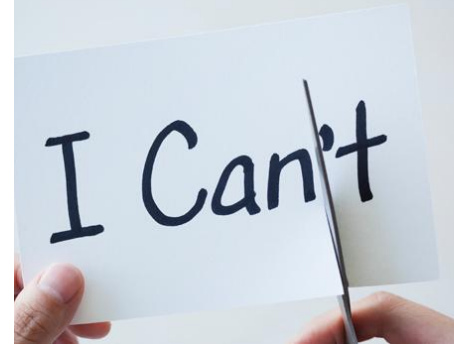
- Visualization produces a virtual reality movie in your mind by using all of your senses and you can imagine yourself:
 - Playing your best match
 - Playing a specific tactic against your opponent
 - Performing under pressure (at 10-10)

Vividness and controllability are key!

You are the director of your movie.



3. Self-talk



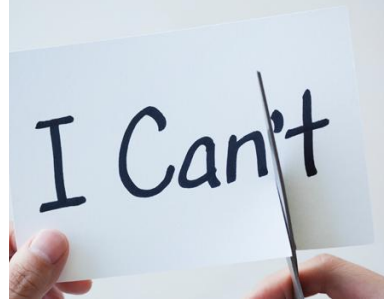
- Your mind and body are interconnected.
- Self-talk is an internal dialogue with yourself, it can be out loud or inside your head.

Self-talk → impacts your performance and self-esteem

Positive self-talk → increased self-worth and performance

Negative self-talk → decreased self-worth and performance

Use affirmations



- Every thoughts you think, every word you say is an affirmation.

Create positive affirmations

- Positive affirmations are short statements which express a personal, positive message of something happening in the present.
- They must be positive in the present tense, focus on positive things you can do instead of negative “don’ts”

Examples

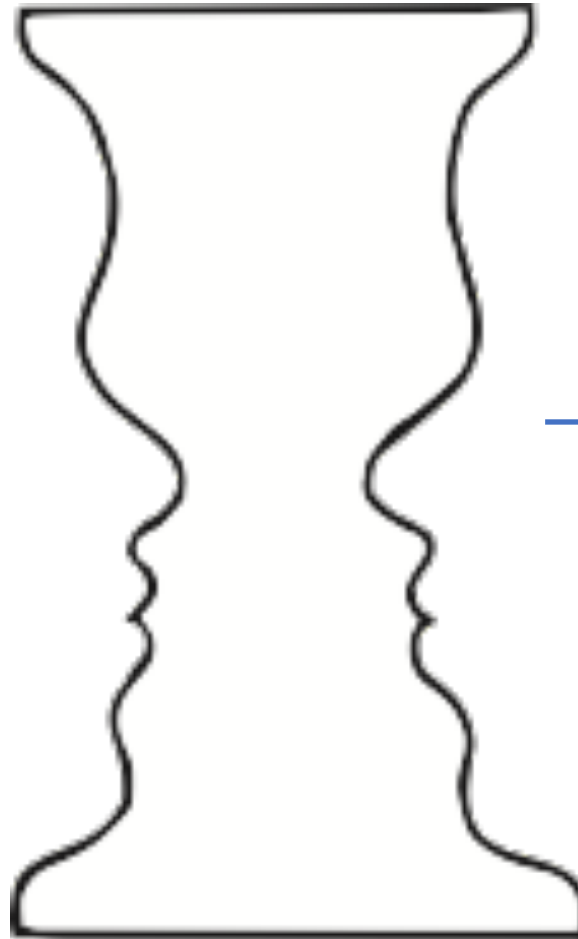
“I’m strong.”

“I feel the ball. I just go for my shots.”

“I’m calm. I can do it.”

The world is literally what we make it

What do you see first?



You can
reframe
situations

Change your negative thoughts to positive ones (reframing exercise)

Examples for reframing

I'm feeling tense and anxious about playing right before my match.

→ I'm excited and ready. I will do my best and I will fight.

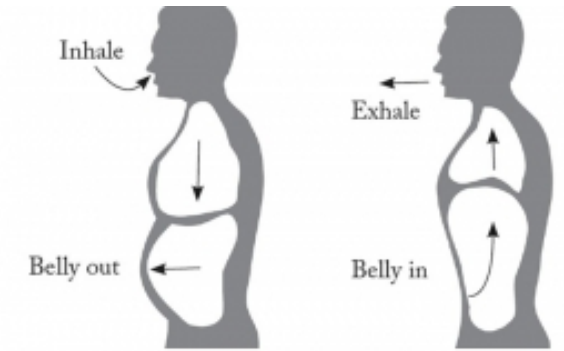
I'm very afraid of this high pressured situation.

→ I'm just focusing on what I can control and on my routines.

I'm so scared and nervous.

→ I believe in myself. I can do it.

4. Breathing Technique



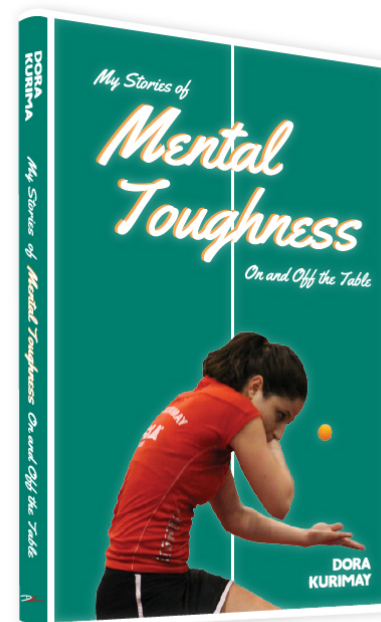
- Deep Breathing raises levels of blood oxygen and releases your tension (4-7-8 ratio)
- Breathe in through your nose and deep into your stomach (make your stomach go in and out), relax your shoulders, let your shoulders down.
- Breathe in under your belly to a mental count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of seven.
- Exhale completely through your mouth to a count of eight, making a whoosh sound.
- Repeat the cycle three more times.

1 Minute Breathing Exercise





Thank you for your attention!



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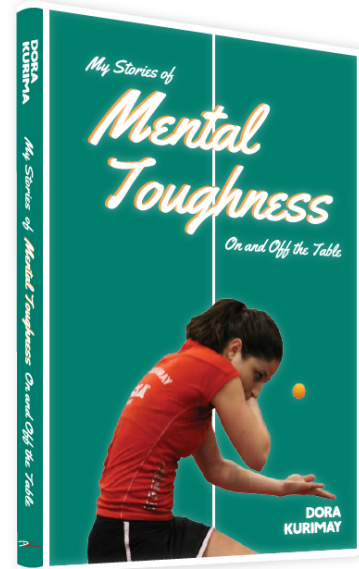


Recommended Reading and Videos

Kurimay, Dora (2020). My Stories of Mental Toughness On and Off the Table. E-book and paperback version. Dora Kurimay Inc. Brooklyn, New York.

Kurimay, Dora (2020). My Stories of Mental Toughness On and Off the Table Videos. 11 Video Episodes. Dora Kurimay Inc. Brooklyn, New York.

Kurimay, Dora (2020). Get Your Game Face On Workbook. Dora Kurimay Inc. Brooklyn, New York.



www.dorakurimay.com