

The background of the image is a reddish-brown running track with white lane markings. Silhouettes of several runners are visible, captured in various stages of their stride, moving from the upper right towards the lower left. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**PERFORMANCE
ANXIETY IS A COMMON
CHALLENGE FACED BY ATHLETES OF
ALL AGES AND SKILL LEVELS.**

**IT CAN MANIFEST AS FEELINGS
OF FEAR, WORRY, OR
APPREHENSION BEFORE OR
DURING COMPETITIONS.**

- This can lead to decreased focus, lowered confidence, and suboptimal athletic performance.
- If not unaddressed, performance anxiety can hinder progress, limit an athlete's potential, and negatively affect their overall well being.

TO COMBAT THIS ISSUE, WE'VE DESIGNED A STRUCTURED 30-DAY PLAN SPECIFICALLY FOR STUDENT ATHLETES.

This plan aims to provide a toolkit of practical techniques and strategies to help overcome performance anxiety and unleash your true athletic potential.

DAY 1-2

Assess Your Anxiety

**REFLECT ON PAST PERFORMANCE ANXIETY
EXPERIENCES AND IDENTIFY TRIGGERS**

**JOURNAL YOUR
THOUGHTS AND
EMOTIONS AFTER A
PRACTICE OR A GAME**



Spend 5-10 minutes each day to perform this task: Choose a quiet time of the day when you can focus.





HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU AN IDEA...

A soccer player may reflect on a previous match where they felt extreme anxiety during a penalty shootout, leading to missed shots.



They can then identify the specific triggers, such as the crowd's noise or the pressure of the situation.



- A track athlete might recall a race where they felt overwhelmed with nerves, causing them to perform poorly.
- They could recognize the fear of failure or the expectations of others as triggers for their anxiety.



A swimmer can think about a time when they had difficulty focusing during a competition, which impacted their race.

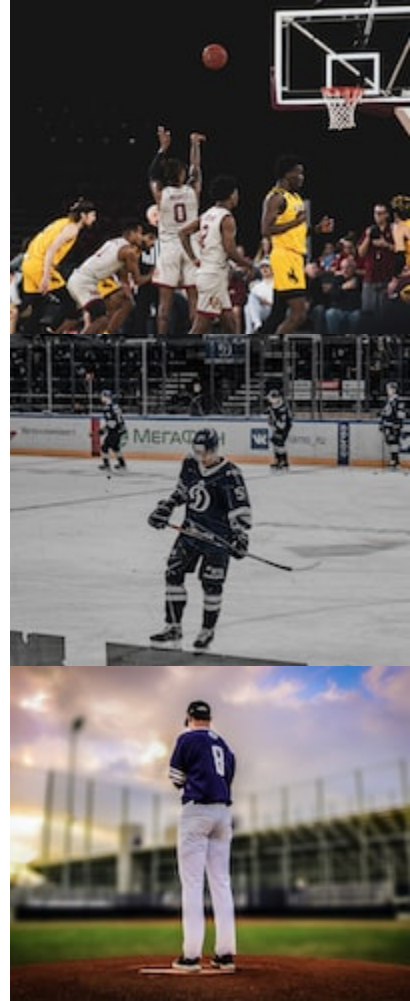


By analyzing the situation, they may find that a lack of preparation triggered their anxiety.



BENEFITS OF ASSESSING ANXIETY AND HOW IT HELPS YOU AS AN ATHLETE

IMPROVED SELF-AWARENESS: BY REFLECTING ON PAST EXPERIENCES AND IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS, ATHLETES CAN DEVELOP A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ANXIETY AND HOW IT AFFECTS THEIR PERFORMANCE.



TARGETED INTERVENTIONS: RECOGNIZING THE SPECIFIC SITUATIONS THAT CAUSE ANXIETY ALLOWS ATHLETES TO DEVELOP TARGETED STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THESE TRIGGERS AND MANAGE THEIR ANXIETY MORE EFFECTIVELY.



ENHANCED EMOTIONAL REGULATION:

Journaling thoughts and emotions during practices and games, provides insights into your emotional patterns and helps better regulate your emotions during high-pressure situations.

DAY 3-5

Set Realistic Goals

- + Create short-term, achievable goals for training and competition.
- + Break down long-term goals into smaller, manageable milestones.



**TIME SPENT: ALLOCATE
5-10 MINUTES EACH
DAY TO COMPLETE
THIS TASK.**

**WHEN TO PERFORM THE TASK:
CHOOSE A TIME WHEN YOU
CAN FOCUS AND PLAN, SUCH
AS AFTER A TRAINING SESSION
OR AT THE END OF THE DAY.**

HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO HELP GIVE
YOU IDEAS...



- A basketball player may set a short-term goal of improving their free-throw accuracy by 10% within a month.
- They break that down into a goal of shooting 100 shots a day.
- A goal inside of th 100 shots is that they must make at least 50 shots or keep shooting until they do.



A cross-country runner might create a goal of shaving 30 seconds off their personal best time in the next three months.


Their long-term goal could be to qualify for a regional competition.

Break that down into milestones such as increasing weekly mileage, focusing on speed workouts, and participating in local races.

- A gymnast can set a short-term goal of mastering a new skill on the balance beam within six weeks.
- They might also have a long-term goal of competing at the state level.
- With milestones like refining their routine, increasing their flexibility, and participating in more competitions to gain experience.



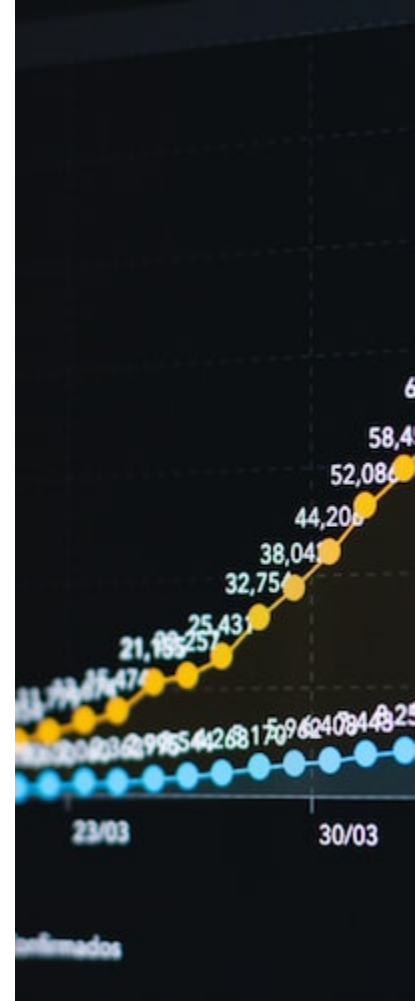
BENEFITS OF SETTING REALISTIC GOALS AND HOW IT HELPS YOU AS AN ATHLETE

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- A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hand holding a black pen, poised to write on a piece of paper. The paper contains a checklist with several items, each preceded by a small square box. The background is a blue and white patterned surface. The overall tone is professional and focused.
- ✓ Enhanced motivation:
 - ✓ Establishing achievable short-term and long-term goals gives you a clear sense of purpose and direction, boosting motivation and commitment to your training.

- ✓ Increased confidence:
 - ✓ Achieving smaller, realistic goals builds self-confidence, which contributes to improved performance and better management of your performance anxiety.



- ✓ Effective progress tracking:
 - ✓ Breaking down long-term goals into smaller milestones allows athletes to track their progress more effectively
 - ✓ This allows you to make necessary adjustments and stay on track without wasting time

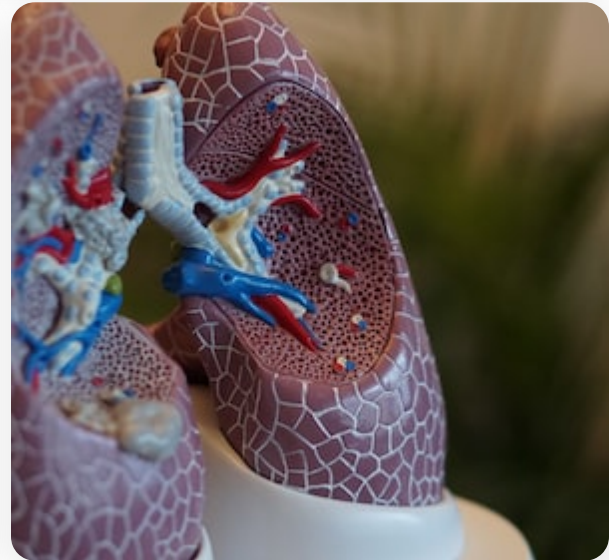


DAY 6-10

Learn Deep Breathing Techniques

PRACTICE DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING FOR 10 MINUTES DAILY

**IMPLEMENT BOX BREATHING
DURING MOMENTS OF
INCREASED STRESS OR
ANXIETY**



HOW TO PERFORM DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING STEP BY STEP

- 1. Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down, with your back straight.
- 2. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen, just below your ribcage.
- 3. Inhale slowly through your nose, allowing your abdomen to rise and expand as it fills with air. Your chest should remain relatively still.
- 4. Exhale slowly through your mouth or nose, gently contracting your abdominal muscles to push the air out. Again, your chest should remain relatively still.
- 5. Continue this pattern of deep, slow breaths for 5-10 minutes, focusing on the rise and fall of your abdomen.

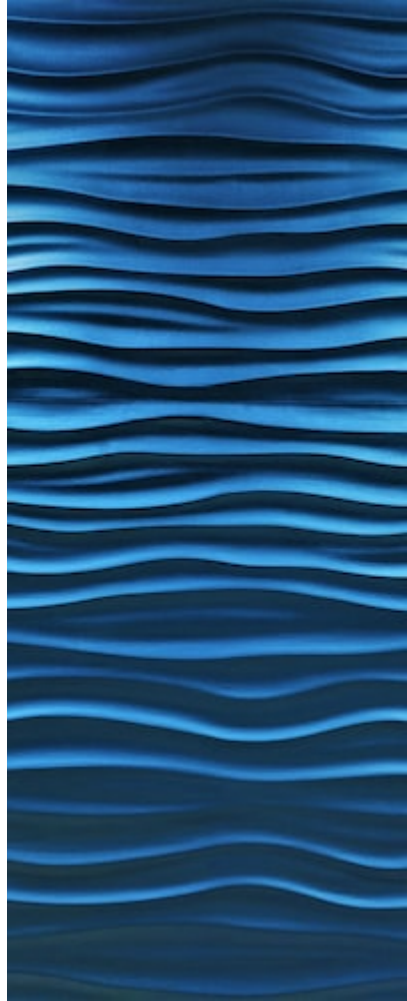
Benefits of diaphragmatic breathing:

- Promotes relaxation by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.
- Reduces stress and anxiety by lowering levels of stress hormones.
- Increases oxygen flow throughout the body, supporting mental clarity and focus.



HOW TO PERFORM BOX BREATHING STEP BY STEP

- 1. Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down, with your back straight.
- 2. Inhale slowly through your nose for a count of four, allowing your chest and abdomen to expand.
- 3. Hold your breath for a count of four.
- 4. Exhale slowly through your mouth or nose for a count of four, emptying your lungs completely.
- 5. Hold your breath again for a count of four.
- 6. Repeat this pattern for several minutes, maintaining the four-count rhythm for each step.



- Benefits of box breathing:
 - Calms the nervous system, reducing stress and anxiety.
 - Increases focus and mental clarity by enhancing oxygen flow to the brain.
 - Helps regulate the body's stress response, making it easier to manage performance anxiety.



- A baseball player might practice diaphragmatic breathing before each training session, focusing on inhaling deeply into their abdomen and exhaling slowly.
- They can use box breathing during a high-stress game to calm their nerves before stepping up to bat or making a critical play in the field.



A basketball player can practice diaphragmatic breathing each night before bed, enhancing relaxation and promoting a sense of calm.

They may use box breathing techniques during high-pressure moments in a game, such as before taking a crucial free throw, to regain control over their emotions and improve focus.

- A hockey player could incorporate diaphragmatic breathing into their daily warm-up routine, concentrating on slow, deep breaths to promote relaxation.
- They might apply box breathing techniques before stepping onto the ice for a high-pressure game or penalty shot, helping them focus and alleviate anxiety.



DAY 11-15

Positive Self-Talk

- Replace negative thoughts with empowering statements
- Develop a list of personal affirmations to recite before competitions



**TIME
SPENT: ALLOCATE 5-10
MINUTES EACH DAY TO
PRACTICE POSITIVE
SELF-TALK.**

**WHEN TO PERFORM THE TASK: PRACTICE
DURING MOMENTS OF SELF-DOUBT OR
BEFORE AND AFTER TRAINING SESSIONS.
RECITE PERSONAL AFFIRMATIONS
BEFORE COMPETITIONS.**

BENEFITS OF POSTIVE SELF TALK AND HOW IT HELPS YOU AS AN ATHLETE

- ✓ Boosted self-confidence: Replacing negative thoughts with empowering statements helping you believe in your abilities, increasing confidence and improving performance.
- ✓ Reduced performance anxiety: Regular practice of positive self-talk helps you manage your anxiety by focusing on strengths and capabilities, rather than dwelling on potential failures or negative outcomes.

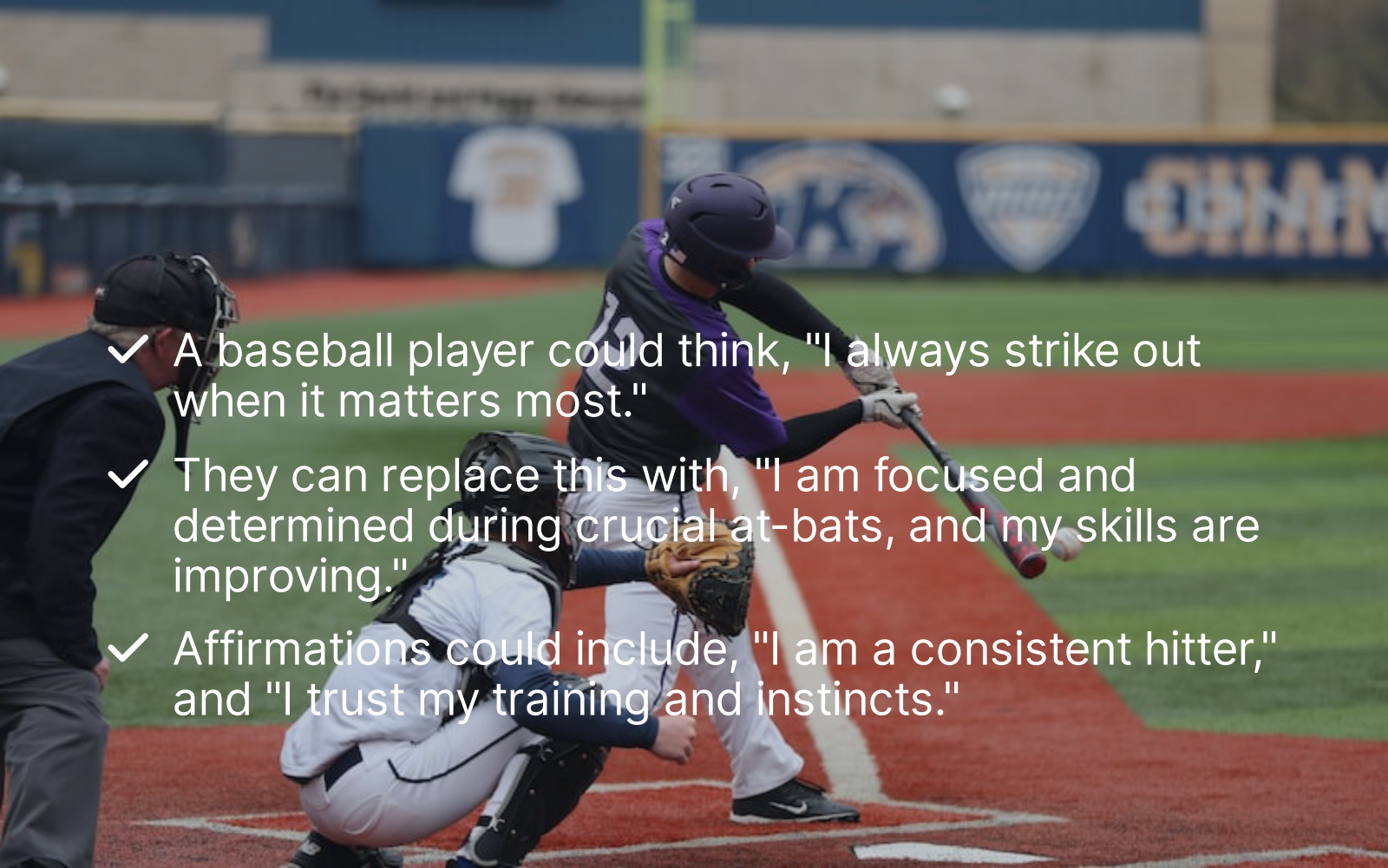


HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
OF WHEN TO USE THESE
TECHNIQUES...



- A basketball player may worry, "I can't handle the pressure of taking the last shot."
- They can replace this with, "I am prepared and confident in my shooting abilities, even in high-pressure situations."
- Affirmations could include, "I am a clutch player," and "I trust my shot."





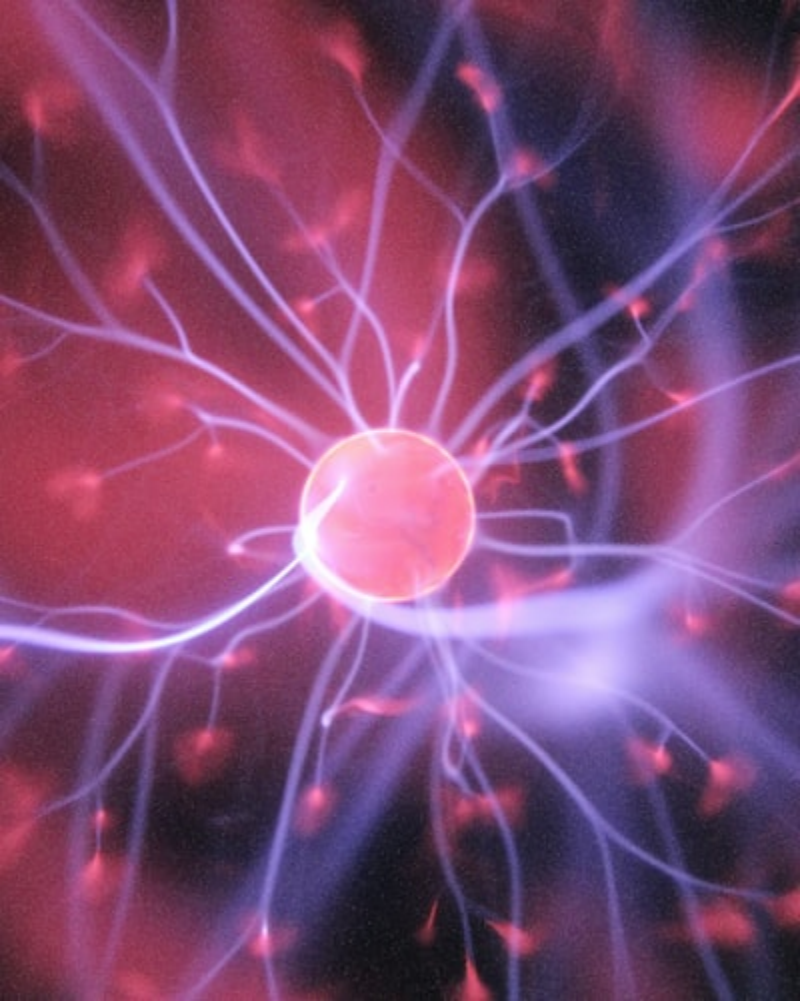
- ✓ A baseball player could think, "I always strike out when it matters most."
- ✓ They can replace this with, "I am focused and determined during crucial at-bats, and my skills are improving."
- ✓ Affirmations could include, "I am a consistent hitter," and "I trust my training and instincts."

- ✓ A lacrosse player could have the thought, "I'll never be fast enough to outrun my opponents." They can replace this with, "I am working on my speed and agility to excel on the field." Affirmations could include, "I am quick and nimble," and "My dedication to training pays off."



DAY 16-20

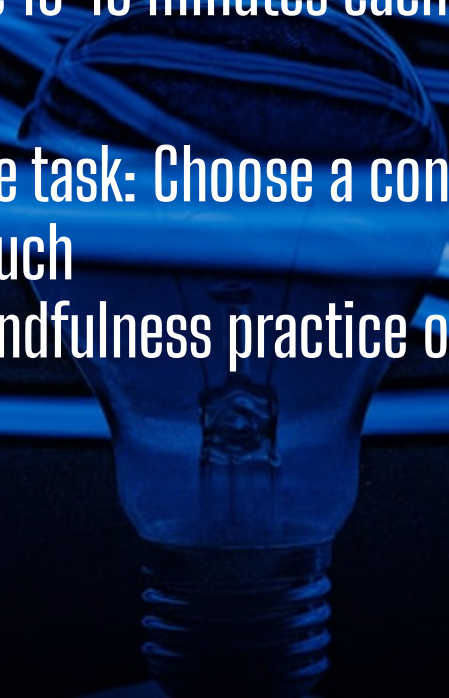
Visualize Success



- Visualization involves mentally rehearsing sports scenarios to boost performance and build confidence.
- This technique activates neural pathways, mimicking real-life practice without physical exertion.

Time spent: Allocate 10–15 minutes each day to practice visualization.

When to perform the task: Choose a consistent time to visualize success, such as during a daily mindfulness practice or right before bedtime.



BENEFITS OF VISUALIZATION AND HOW IT HELPS YOU AS AN ATHLETE

**IMPROVED CONFIDENCE: VISUALIZING
SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCES REINFORCES
YOUR BELIEF IN YOUR ABILITIES, LEADING
TO INCREASED CONFIDENCE AND BETTER
PERFORMANCE.**



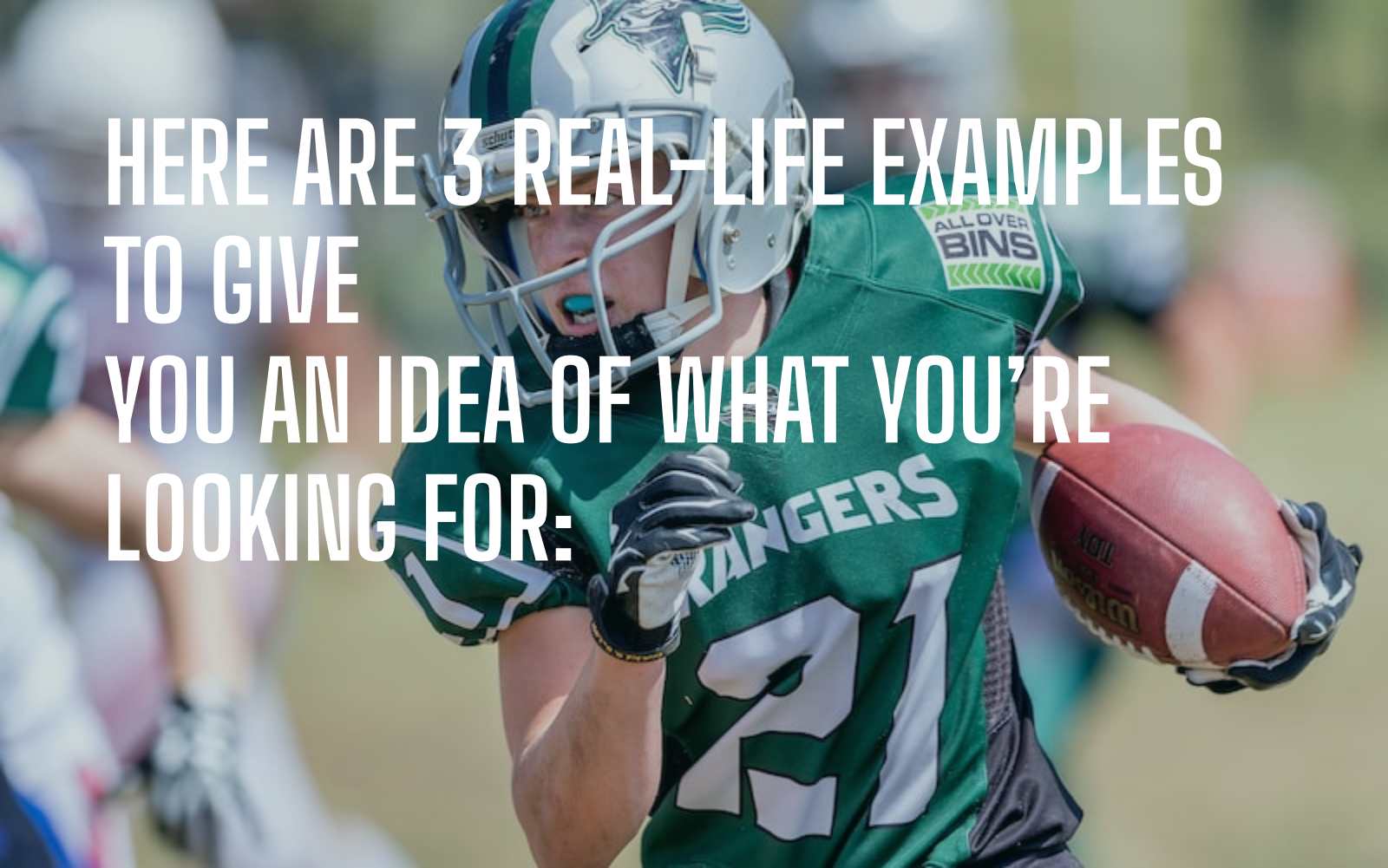


ENHANCED MENTAL PREPARATION: MENTALLY REHEARSING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS HELPS YOU FEEL MORE PREPARED TO FACE OBSTACLES, MAKING IT EASIER TO REMAIN COMPOSED AND FOCUSED DURING COMPETITIONS.

**STRENGTHENED NEURAL PATHWAYS:
VISUALIZATION HELPS STRENGTHEN THE
NEURAL PATHWAYS RESPONSIBLE FOR
EXECUTING SPECIFIC SKILLS AND
MOVEMENTS, EFFECTIVELY IMPROVING
AN ATHLETE'S MUSCLE MEMORY AND
OVERALL PERFORMANCE.**



HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU AN IDEA OF WHAT YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR:



DAY 21-23

Establish a Pre-Competition Routine

**DESIGN A ROUTINE THAT
INCLUDES RELAXATION
TECHNIQUES, MENTAL
PREPARATION, AND
PHYSICAL WARM-UPS.**



BENEFITS OF A PRE-COMPETITION ROUTINE AND HOW IT HELPS AN ATHLETE

Increased focus: A consistent pre-competition routine helps athletes mentally prepare and maintain focus, enhancing their ability to perform at their best during competitions.

Reduced anxiety: Incorporating relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or visualization, into the pre-competition routine can help athletes manage performance anxiety and remain calm under pressure.

Consistent performance: Practicing a pre-competition routine before each training session and competition promotes consistency, which can lead to more predictable and reliable performance outcomes.



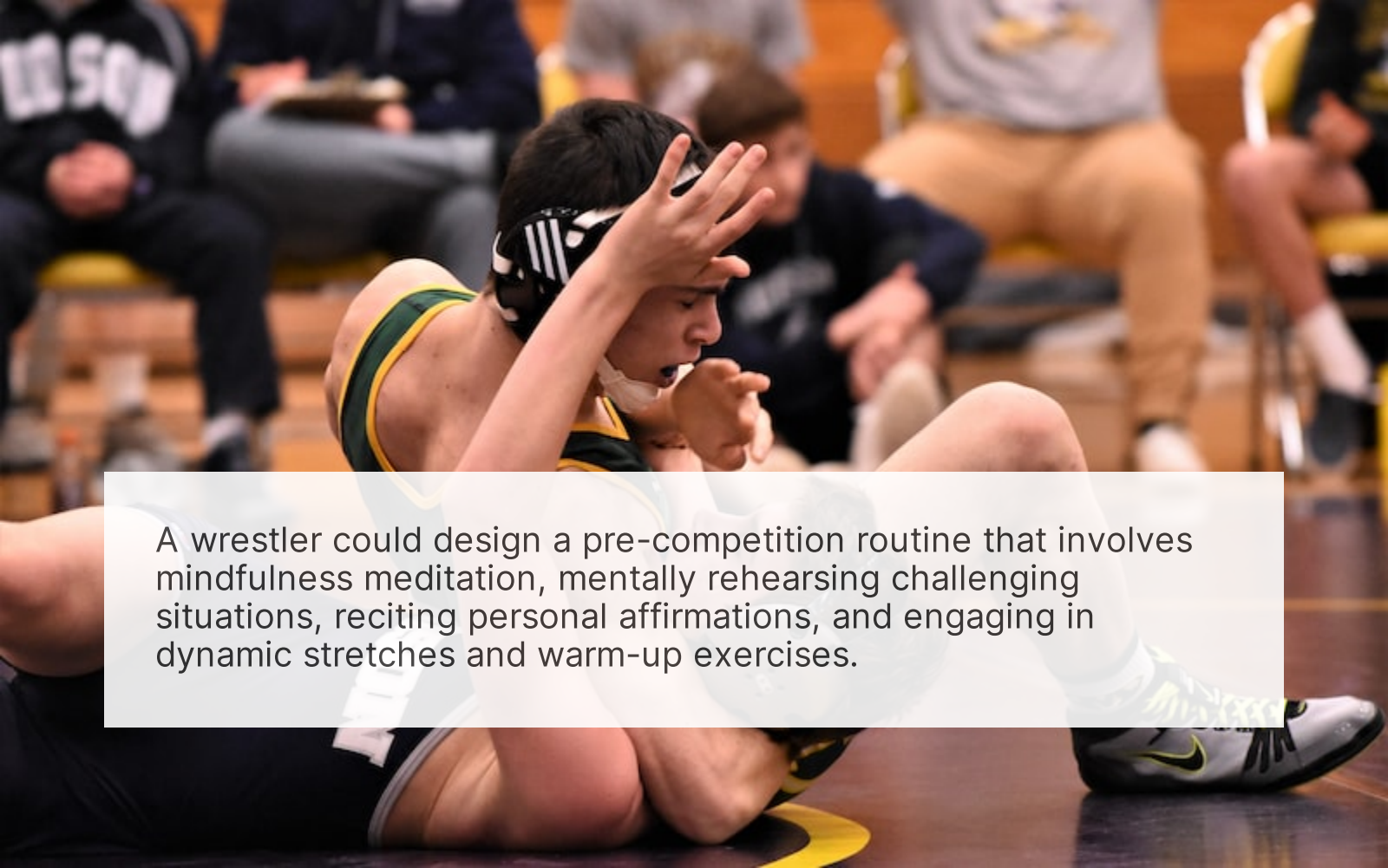
HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU SOME IDEAS...



A swimmer could develop a routine that includes listening to calming music, engaging in deep breathing exercises, visualizing successful race outcomes, and performing dynamic stretches to warm up muscles.



A tennis player might create a routine consisting of progressive muscle relaxation, positive self-talk, reviewing game strategies, and completing a series of sport-specific warm-up drills.

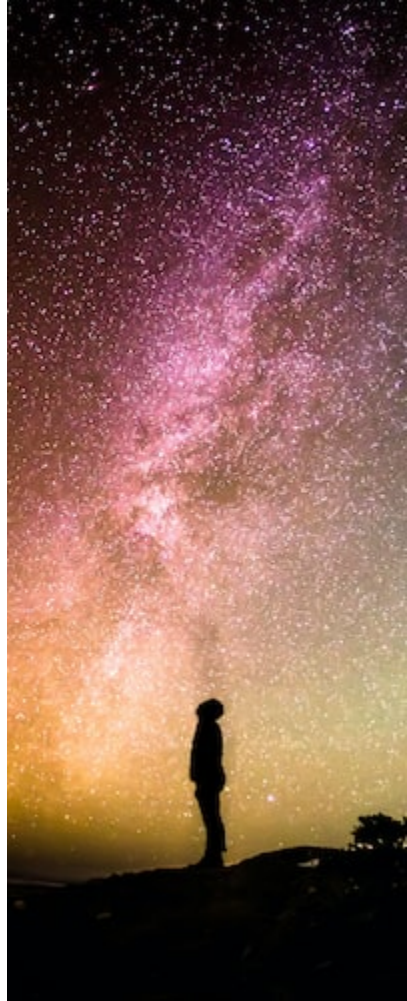


A wrestler could design a pre-competition routine that involves mindfulness meditation, mentally rehearsing challenging situations, reciting personal affirmations, and engaging in dynamic stretches and warm-up exercises.

DAY 24-27

Mindfulness and Meditation

**PRACTICING MINDFULNESS THROUGH
MEDITATION OR BODY SCANNING. FOCUS
ON STAYING PRESENT AND AWARE OF YOUR
PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STATE.**



**TIME SPENT: ALLOCATE 10-15
MINUTES EACH DAY TO
PRACTICE MINDFULNESS
THROUGH MEDITATION OR
BODY SCANNING**

**WHEN TO PERFORM THE TASK:
CHOOSE A CONSISTENT TIME
TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS,
SUCH AS IN THE MORNING OR
BEFORE BEDTIME.**

BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION FOR YOU AS AN ATHLETE

Improved focus: Regular mindfulness practice helps athletes develop greater mental focus, allowing them to concentrate better during training and competitions.

Enhanced emotional regulation: Mindfulness and meditation can help athletes manage their emotions more effectively, reducing the impact of negative emotions on performance and promoting a positive mindset.

Reduced performance anxiety: Engaging in mindfulness practices can help athletes become more aware of their anxiety and learn to manage it, leading to a calmer and more composed state during competitions.



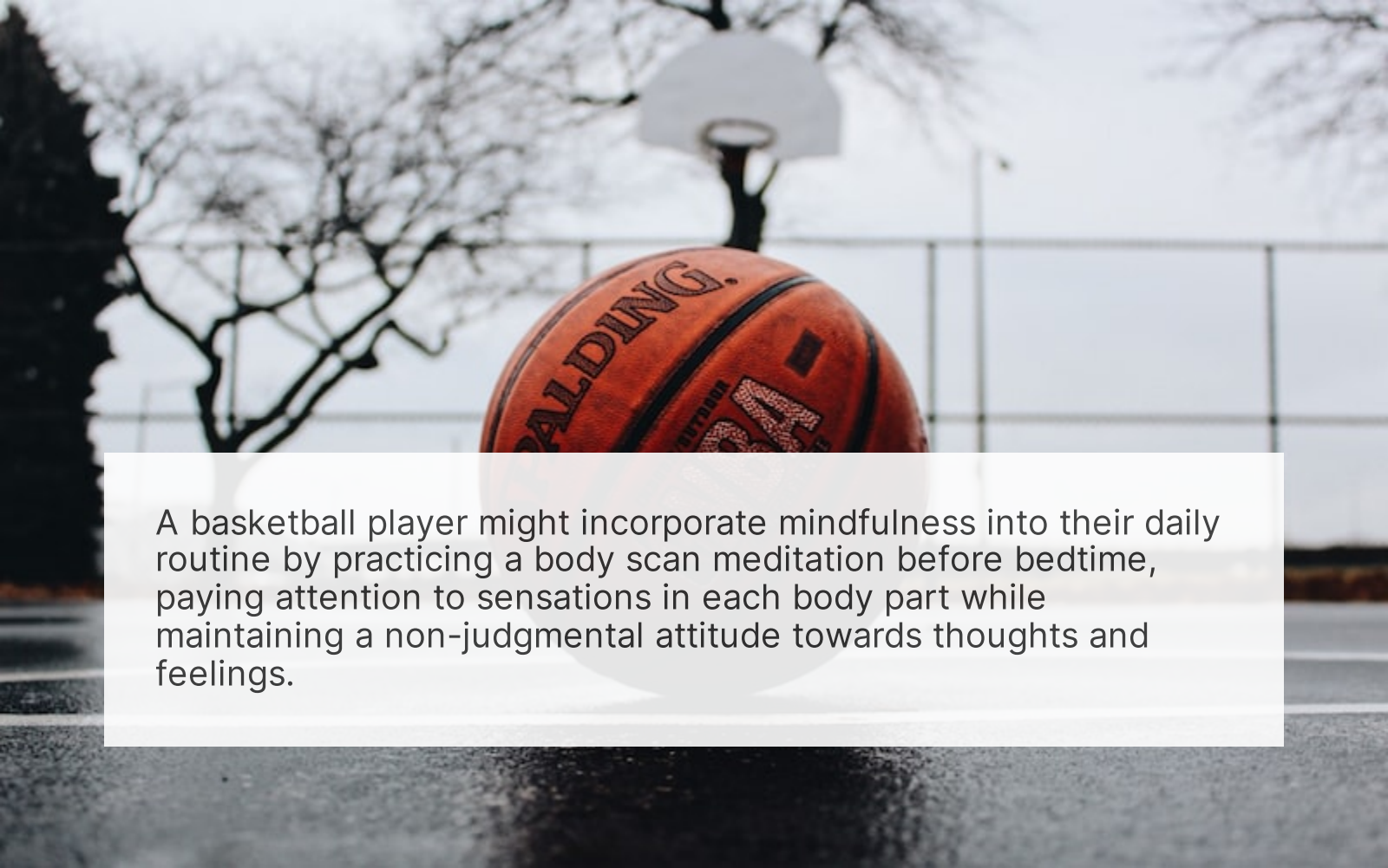
**HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU SOME IDEAS...**



A figure skater can dedicate time each day to sitting in a quiet space and focusing on their breath, observing their thoughts and feelings without judgment. They might also practice a body scan meditation to become more aware of sensations in each part of their body.



A soccer player could begin each day with a guided meditation, focusing on their breath and allowing their thoughts to come and go without judgment. They can also practice staying present and aware during training sessions, noticing physical sensations and mental states.



A basketball player might incorporate mindfulness into their daily routine by practicing a body scan meditation before bedtime, paying attention to sensations in each body part while maintaining a non-judgmental attitude towards thoughts and feelings.

DAY 28-29

Reframe Anxiety as Excitement

**VIEW PERFORMANCE ANXIETY AS A NATURAL AND
BENEFICIAL PART OF COMPETITION.**

**EMBRACE ANXIETY
AS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO ENHANCE FOCUS
AND DRIVE.**



- Throughout these two days, consciously work on reframing anxiety as excitement whenever you experience performance-related nerves.
- Practice this mindset shift during training sessions, competitions, or any other situations where you feel anxious.



BENEFITS OF REFRAMING ANXIETY AS EXCITEMENT AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU

Improved mindset: By viewing anxiety as excitement, athletes can develop a more positive and constructive mindset, which can lead to better overall performance.

Increased confidence: Embracing anxiety as a natural and beneficial part of competition can help athletes feel more confident and in control, reducing the negative impact of performance anxiety.

Enhanced focus and motivation: Reframing anxiety as excitement can help athletes channel their nerves into increased focus and drive, allowing them to perform at their best during competitions.

HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU SOME IDEAS...

CHANGING
Mindsets

A volleyball player who typically experiences anxiety before serving can reframe their thoughts by viewing their nerves as excitement that fuels their focus and precision, helping them execute more accurate serves.





A track athlete who gets nervous before a race can choose to see their anxiety as an adrenaline boost that increases their energy and determination, helping them achieve better race times.



A hockey player who feels anxious during high-pressure moments can reframe their nerves as excitement that sharpens their focus and drives them to perform at their best, leading to more precise shots and better decision-making on the ice.

DAY 30

Seek Support and Reflect

- ✓ Reach out to teammates, coaches, or sports psychologists for guidance.
- ✓ Share your experiences and learn from others who have faced performance anxiety.
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented throughout the 30-day plan.
- ✓ Identify areas for improvement and continue refining your anxiety management toolkit



TIME SPENT: DEDICATE TIME ON THIS DAY TO ENGAGE IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS, REFLECT ON YOUR PROGRESS, AND EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STRATEGIES YOU'VE PRACTICED.

WHEN TO PERFORM THE TASK: CHOOSE A TIME WHEN YOU CAN COMFORTABLY ENGAGE WITH OTHERS, SUCH AS AFTER PRACTICE OR DURING A BREAK.

BENEFITS OF SEEKING SUPPORT AND REFLECTING

- ✓ Enhanced learning: Sharing experiences and seeking guidance from others can help athletes gain new perspectives
- ✓ Improved self-awareness: Reflecting on the effectiveness of the anxiety management strategies implemented throughout the 30-day plan can help athletes better understand their progress and areas for improvement.
- ✓ Stronger support network: Reaching out to teammates, coaches, or sports psychologists can strengthen an athlete's support network.



A vibrant sunset scene with the sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the ocean's surface. The sky is filled with soft, orange-tinted clouds, and the water shows gentle ripples and waves.

**HERE ARE 3 REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES
TO GIVE
YOU SOME IDEAS...**

A baseball player can talk to their teammates about their experiences with performance anxiety, learning from their coping strategies and offering support to one another.





A soccer player might reach out to their coach for guidance on managing anxiety, discussing their progress and receiving feedback on the techniques they've practiced throughout the 30-day plan.



A baseball player could consult with a sports psychologist for professional advice and support, sharing their experiences and gaining valuable insights into further anxiety management strategies.

As you conclude your 30-day journey, I hope you've found the tools and strategies provided invaluable in overcoming performance anxiety and unlocking your full athletic potential.

- Remember, practice and consistency are key to making these techniques an integral part of your routine. Continue seeking support, refining your anxiety management toolkit, and sharing your experiences with others.
- You've taken crucial steps towards becoming a more focused, confident, and resilient athlete. Keep pushing forward, and watch as your performance reaches new heights!

**CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING THE 30-
DAY PROGRAM, AND HERE'S TO YOUR FUTURE
SUCCESS IN SPORTS!**