

Personal Performance Enhancement Project

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Introduction

This project is highly relevant to my current athletic pursuit of fencing. Although it is unusual for adults in their thirties to learn and seriously compete in a new sport, I have a strong athletic identity that drives the need to fully commit. After three competition seasons and two National Championships, I want to focus on the mental aspects that are holding me back from consistently performing my best in tournaments. Fear of failure has always negatively affected me as an athlete and caused overthinking. In fencing (as in most other sports), overthinking is a death sentence during a bout (the term for the competitive engagement between opponents). The consequences of my overthinking are losses to objectively less-skilled opponents. Further, I see being a current competitive athlete as an asset to my Sport and Performance Psychology (SPP) practice. It will give further credit to my professional training to be able to say that I have “practiced what I preach,” and will increase my empathy for clients navigating these intervention techniques.

I describe myself as being an athlete “in my DNA.” My biological parents are both athletic, and I grew up in an environment that highly valued sport participation. I have always been a sport specialist, never wanting to do more than one at a time. From age three to eight I was a gymnast, and from eight to 20 years old I was an elite competitive figure skater. In my final years as a figure skater, I represented Greece in the 2009 and 2010 World Figure Skating Championships in the pairs event. My skating partner and I were attempting to qualify for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games but unfortunately missed the qualification requirement by two placements. This “failure” intensifies many of the adaptive and maladaptive behaviors I have as an athlete.

I started fencing at age 32 after sharing the introductory lesson package with my then five-year-old daughter. She moved on to another sport, while I discovered my love of fencing. I started competing after nine months of leaning and am now competing on a national level. Because I am too young to compete in the veteran events, which start at age 40, I compete in the Senior category which starts at age thirteen. Most of my competitors are younger than I, between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, having both advantages and disadvantages. For example, I am a highly experienced athlete and thus have a broader perspective on the athletic career, but I can sometimes be at a physical disadvantage to younger opponents who have quicker reaction times. I excelled in gymnastics and figure skating because I have a strong sense of perseverance.

I am a technically proficient fencer but am struggling with confidence and the tactical mindset. After recent competitions I realized that I was afraid to either choose the wrong action or execute the right action poorly creating the fatal error of hesitation in a sport made of “no fear” moments. My pervasive fear of failure causes overthinking in the form of attention focused on too many details rather than the “whole picture,” and this hyperfocus causes inattention to distance between the opponent. My most successful times fencing are characterized by a clear mind and trusting my instincts. Therefore, improving overthinking will diversify my tactical range because I will not have to compensate for hyper focus by limiting my tactical choices. My hope for the PPEP is a better understanding of how to produce my flow state. Not surprisingly, I tend to ruminate and deliberate excessively in many areas of my life, so learning how to trust my instinct will likely impact my overall cognitive load. Additionally, the less cognitive space occupied by mental cycling, the more space is available for fine tuning bad habits on technical skills. While I have worked with a sport psychologist recently, I am looking forward to focusing on a smaller topic and exploring how it may improve confidence overall.

Self-Talk

The first step in implementing self-talk skill in fencing has been recognizing my patterns of both positive and negative self-talk and the lexical content. I expected to observe that my dialogue is negative much of the time; however, the Automatic Self-Talk Questionnaire For Sports (ASTQS; Zourbanos et al., 2009) and thought journal gave insight into when it was occurring and the type of negative talk (see Appendix A). After completing the Self-Talk Script Development sheet, I kept a copy at home and at the fencing club to read in the morning, at night, and before practice (see Appendix A). I succeeded in catching when the negative talk starts, but I found trying to change negative to positive thoughts to be too extreme of a process during fencing. By the end of the project, using a cognitive-behavioral (CBT) balanced thought approach was more useful in evaluating the automatic negative thoughts but only outside fencing practice times, otherwise it was too distracting.

After using the initial self-talk script for a week, I thought it would be more impactful if separated into two different statements: a short list of affirmations and the longer script (see Appendix A). The short list will be more effective to read immediately before practice and to say on a loop during practice resets. I noticed some somatic and cognitive anxiety symptoms when reading the statement, so until I believe it, I wanted to break it down into affirmations and aspirations. Mullen and Hardy (2010) note Beggs (1990) conclusion that performance goals can undermine anxious competitors. It adds an avenue for failure, putting more pressure on the athlete. Before practice I will focus on statements like, “I am fearless.” I also reflected that my negative self-talk reflected my anxiety about how winning and losing (even in practice) indicated my level of competence. Therefore, I tested the strategy of using self-talk statements that eliminated outcome uncertainty by saying phrases such as, “I have already won all the bouts tonight.” (Walter et al., 2019). During practice, I tried the same method during a tough bout by

reminding myself, “I’ve already won this bout.” I continued using this strategy throughout the project until and morphed into not dwelling on the outcome of bouts at all. My interpretation of this specific phrase was that it decreased my outcome-related cognitive anxiety which allowed me to use instinct rather than the “right” actions to avoid losing. I anticipate using this strategy in the long-term because it will have a greater effect than using it for as a short-term intervention (Walter et al., 2019).

The biggest impact the self-talk strategies have had on fencing is awareness. Cognitive theory proposes thoughts affect feelings which affect behavior and conversely behavior affects feelings which affect behavior in a reciprocal, bidirectional relationship, and reappraising can transform negative thoughts from a hinderance to a performance aid (Williams & Hacker, 2021). The PPEP process made me aware of much cognitive appraisal was affecting my performance. I now feel that being a “nervous competitor” is a changeable state rather than a fixed personality trait to be overcome. Consequently, I identify with Albert Ellis’s rational emotive behavioral therapy (REBT) for my professional practice because can now connect my own experience with irrational beliefs (identified by the contents of self-talk) with Ellis’s theories used in the readings for this course and the counseling theories course, particularly the ABC(DE) cognitive restructuring (Prochaska & Norcross, 2018; Williams & Hacker, 2021). Practically, I will first use the ASTQS to assess strengths and areas of improvements and then use REBT disputing as a method of restructuring negative self-talk.

Goal Setting

My goal setting strategies started with filling out the Goal Setting worksheet (see Appendix B) and subsequently the weekly goals form (see Appendices B-F). When reflecting on this task I see the importance of coach-student collaboration on goal creation because both my

goals for the week and my coach's goals impact lesson content and areas of focus during bouts. If our respective goals were not congruent, then it may lead to frustration on my part or her perceiving that I was deliberately ignoring her feedback. While my coach does assign tasks or specific areas of focus, I am not consistent with writing them down. Once completed, I did not use original Goal-Setting Worksheet to formulate weekly goals; they were a result of reflecting on the previous week. Gould (2021) mentions Wanlin and colleagues' (1997) goal-setting package which included an "overall mission" as well as long-term goal (pp. 191). After a few weeks of setting weekly goals, I found that the Goal-Setting Worksheet was more of a mission statement. As a practitioner I would include this worksheet as part of my goal-setting package" to establish the mission, but I would also follow Gould's (2021) goal staircase model to create a manageable pathway to the long-term goal. However, during times of low motivation, I did find the visual reminder of the Goal-Setting Worksheet beneficial.

The PPEP showed me that flexibility is important for short-term goals to become steps toward long-term goals. While I am familiar with the concept of setting goals and have always been ambitious, consistently writing them down provided greater clarity and focus, which, in turn, helped determine what goals have enhanced either my motivation or performance. As Locke and Latham (2002) cited by Jeong and colleagues (2021) note, goal setting is effective because it encourages creating task-relevant strategies along with persistence and effort. For me, the big goals drive persistence while the smaller goals facilitate task-relevant strategies, and they both motivate effort level. The process of the Goal Setting Worksheet, despite some weaknesses, was impactful in planning and mentally organizing the steps for improvement. As noted, I am a reflective and perfectionistic athlete, so I constantly think about how I can perform better. Although this can be advantageous, it is not helpful if the thoughts only cycle through my mind.

The daily improvement steps have been a springboard for making efficacious goals. To accomplish the task of formulating more incremental goals I created a new Weekly Goal Log that I used for the rest of the project because it addressed specific actions related to a singular goal each week (see Appendix C).

Overall, I was pleased with the new Weekly Goal Log but would make a few changes for professional use in my practice. I feel a greater sense of accomplishment using the one goal and three actions strategy, and it is easier to track whether it is the goal or the actions that are the issue. If I've completed the actions and have not seen improvement then I may need to change the tasks, but if I cannot complete the actions, the goal may need to be re-worked or replaced. In their textbook chapter Duda and Treasure (2021) cite Duda's (2001) achievement goal orientation findings that the most adaptive orientation was high task/high ego which they explained through Nicholls' (1989) theory that this orientation gives a wider range of opportunities to demonstrate competence by focuses on either task or ego goals as needed. Therefore, I return to Gould's (2021) suggestion to set performance, outcome and process goals. As it may be overwhelming to have all three types of goals in one week, I would include a line identifying what type this week's goal belongs to so that the client and I can track and balance all three types. Knowing your capacity in life and as an athlete is important to maintain high-level activity without getting burned out, and I recognized that I need to complete all self- and authority- assigned task to feel successful and thereby confident. So, setting one goal with up to three action steps sets up a more manageable path to success.

From my experience, goal setting is the foundation of performance enhancement. Your goals should determine your behavior as an athlete, and the gap between those two is where the athlete has the most control. When speaking to a colleague about goal setting, we discussed how

frequently writing the big goals and dreams, the “why,” may be an unnecessary exercise because they should be intrinsic or at least fully integrated into the athletic identity (M. Krause, personal communication, August 14, 2025). The dreams are a good reminder in times of de-motivation, but I am currently in a highly motivated state, in part because it is the beginning of the season. I think the weekly goals are going to be important to keep me focused and accountable on making the small changes that are going to make a larger impact. I find myself thinking and saying, “If I can just figure out (x), then I’ll be so good.” While there are many issues with the second part of the statement, the first part is where I can orient goal setting with weekly actions so that I can answer the question I would ask of my own clients, “Well, what you are you *doing* to improve that?”

Concentration/Focus

Because I am generally able to concentrate when I am motivated to complete a task, during the first week of implementing concentration strategies, I only targeted completing concentration grids. I was diagnosed as an adult with high functioning ADHD, and I believe the ability to hyperfocus is a coping mechanism I developed as a child. Doing the concentration grids has not made a significant impact on my fencing, even though I consistently completed them. However, they provided an interesting opportunity to track my self-talk. When completing the grids, I followed a similar thought pattern to one I have while fencing where I feel more anxiety about maintain a good performance than I do about improving a negative performance. I was more excited than nervous to try to improve a performance that started off poorly. While doing the concentration grids was not a useful long-term strategy for concentration, it could be a useful tool as a low-stakes test for identifying self-talk patterns and content in future clients.

In getting feedback from my coach about my performance at Nationals, we discussed how overthinking, particularly thinking sequentially, interfered with my performance. In our first lesson of the new season, she told me, “You see; you go.” This concept is consistent with Mullen and Hardy’s (2010) findings that part process goals trigger conscious processing and disrupt the flow. Therefore, I observed that my “concentration” challenge may be a focal issue. After instructor feedback, I transitioned into working identifying the most effective attentional focus points than sustaining concentration. There was a French study published in 2025 on attention and coping strategies of elite fencers where the researchers found that focusing on distance and timing was associated with more touches won and less touches lost (Bracco et al., 2025). However, in contrast to Mullen and Hardy (2010), Bracco and colleagues noted the element of deception in epee fencing required fencers to revert to conscious processing at certain times. The two studies aligned on the use of holistic cues (Mullen & Hardy, 2010) to achieve precision tasks that require both external focus on the opponent and internal motor adjustments (Bracco et al., 2025).

Considering, as noted by Bracco and colleagues (2025), the extreme mental load of fencing to manage emotional coping simultaneously with contextual physical demands my strategy should be adjusted to creating short, holistic internal and external cues with the future addition of short grounding strategies to “zoom out” from over-focus (see Appendix C). After reading the Bracco et al. (2025) article, I attended I camp where a different coach unknowingly defined this concept of spatial-temporal focus as the single step when a fencer enters the “danger zone” or the distance from which either opponent could feasibly make an attack. Afterwards, I experimented with focusing on this specific time and space during a bout for a week and have kept that focus because it was highly successful.

Concentration is not historically an issue for me. However, I had the revelation that I lose concentration because I have *too many* task-relevant thoughts and hit a cusp point of mental exhaustion. So, focus that is what was relevant to my PPEP rather than concentration. I proficiently concentrate on the wrong things quite often. For example, I may be concentrating so hard on my plan of attack that I end up getting hit because I forget about what the opponent might do at any moment. I am always also very aware of my thoughts and emotions, which can become an overwhelming task to try to manage that, the strategic plan, and awareness of the opponent's cues. This is where I believe concentration, focus and mindfulness are connected. I think if I can practice mindfulness rather than hyperawareness of my emotions, I will be able to focus on the correct visual cues. Although mindfulness is essentially the opposite of focus, I thought they could be combined as a powerful tool. While I would have liked to reframe the ego-avoidant expectations I have, that process was taking too long in the middle of fencing. I hypothesized that accepting negative thoughts without judgement would allow me cognitive space to focus on more task-relevant thoughts such as being ready to defend or watching for the moment to attack. I did not anticipate that mindfulness alone could solve the focus issue; it would require more directive interventions such as reframing or grounding.

Mindfulness

Based on the descriptions of the mindfulness protocols in the Mannion (2021) chapter, mindfulness should be practiced out of the sport context before utilizing it in the sport context. Mannion describes mindfulness in the sport context as a combination of Eastern philosophy and Western psychology where we practice awareness of present thoughts and feelings without judgement. As someone with an acute survival instinct, I appraise everything as a matter of habit. So, I purchased a child's pretend magic wand filled with water, beads, and sequins as a portable

tool for practicing mindfulness. When I had a moment during the day, I would describe the physical features or movement of the items inside. I found that, interestingly, the sound and sensation of tapping them together was more soothing than the visual elements. Mindfulness has been shown to improve attentive capacity and lower mental fatigue as well as improving the biomarkers indicating cognitive function and stress in Chinese fencers (Ding et al., 2025). Of note however, in the Ding and colleagues (2025) study, fencers benefitted from mindfulness, but the results were assessed after a 20-week training, which I would consider long-term. Something else I considered when reviewing the study was the potential bias for Eastern cultures to be more receptive to mindfulness philosophy (Prochaska & Norcross, 2018). Based on these assumptions, I think if I use mindfulness as a long-term practice, it will likely improve performance, but it would be preemptive to judge the effectiveness after only a few weeks.

Based on clarifications in discussion posts, I realized that I was using grounding and redirecting as opposed to mindfulness. When I noticed myself making assumptions about opponents, I started counting until we began our fencing bout. While I found that helpful, it is not mindfulness. Mindfulness would have been noticing those assumptions but letting them go to be present in what was happening in the present moment, like clipping into the scoring machine. For now, mindfulness is about accepting that I am doing my best with the time I have available for training. After the experience of not qualifying for the Olympics by a few points, I have a pervasive fear that I can be doing "more" training. While it is true that we can always do more, being in the mental space of constantly trying to catch up is not productive. Staying present helps me focus on what I can do today in any of those roles rather than getting lost in the "shoulds." However, I believe this only works for athletes who have a highly integrated schema in their athletic identity, otherwise it becomes a slippery slope of excuses.

After I experimented and reflected on mindfulness for a few weeks, I saw mindfulness more as a life philosophy than an intervention. For me, both CBT and mindfulness principles need to work together. Being present and having self-compassion has helped reduce some practice anxiety, and it does reduce the mental fatigue. However, mindfulness may not always be a viable radical option when there was a time constraint and the cognitive load was high. For example, if I notice anxiety in a three minute bout it may not be enough to merely accept that I am anxious; I would likely need to stop the thought and refocus on grounding or a holistic cue.

I used the acceptance aspect of mindfulness to some success at the first tournament of the season in August (see Appendix E). The first competition day I felt relaxed and excited for the first event of the season. I fenced most of the event without putting pressure on the results and tried to focus on the tactics and skills my coach asked me to use for the competition. The second day I arrived feeling more somatic and cognitive anxiety because I decided to focus more on the higher-level division this season. I typically performed better in that division last season, so then the expectation of that realization caused some more anxiety. Additionally, something occurred outside of the context of the competition that caused some minor distress and then anger. My first response to the combination of these negative feelings was to try to change them into positive interpretations, such as “the anxiety is just excitement to compete today.” That did not alleviate the symptoms, so next I tried watching a video I made of the beach I enjoy trying to promote relaxation. This step provided some temporary somatic relief, but the thoughts were still present. My last resort was to accept that I felt uncomfortable in my nervousness and embrace the anger from the external situation. I “fenced angry,” and won my first two pool bouts, completing my goal for that event.

Stress Management

My biggest stressor is the judgements that I make about myself other people and what I perceive others may judge about me. As a seasoned competitive athlete I generally have both awareness and control over my physiological arousal. However, per the Hardy (1990) cusp catastrophe model, as cited by Baldock and colleagues (2021), I get to a drop-off point where that physiological control is irrelevant due to the intensity of the judgement expectations. As explained by the processing efficiency theory, my anxiety occupies too much mental space for working memory to function efficiently, causing analysis paralysis (Baldock et al., 2021). As noted above, being an experienced athlete I already plan, information gather, and have routines, so I decided to focus less on managing stress and more on managing rationality of thoughts causing the stress.

I decided to focus on two areas of stress: anxiety during competition simulations and “failing” during lessons. Firstly, while my strong task orientation allows me to use practices as a learning opportunity, competition simulation games give me very high levels of cognitive anxiety. Winning or losing indicates competence in a highly public way in these games, and they undermine my self-efficacy. I find that physiological arousal is low during the simulations but the cognitive anxiety is almost the same as during a real competition. Secondly, making multiple mistakes in a row during a lesson easily frustrates me, and I notice my coach taking soothing role rather corrective because I cannot accept the mistakes. Both of these situations are moments where I perceive that I “look” incompetent and not that I “am” incompetent. To illustrate, I have a former fencing coach who highly values results and is very confident that he has superior coaching skills. When I fenced his student at a camp, I felt anxious about how he was judging my performance. This was, unsurprisingly, distracting, and I did not fence my best against her.

Whereas, when I fenced the coach himself, I did not feel anxious at all and fenced very well. The declination in performance may be explained by cognitive appraisal theory cited in the Doron and Martinent (2017) study on the relationship between coping strategies, cognitive appraisal, and emotions in fencers. The findings of the study were that task-oriented coping was a partial mediator between challenge appraisal and performance, and disengagement-oriented coping was a partial mediator of threat appraisal and performance. In my case, viewing fencing my coach as a challenge because I controlled more of the situation led to active, task-oriented coping may have led to more positive emotions during the bout. Whereas, viewing my lack of control over my former coach's perception of my competence when fencing his student as a threat led to disengagement-oriented coping strategies (such as trying not to lose) which are associated with negative emotions.

I had a second opportunity to fence both that coach and his fencer and tried to change how I appraised the situations. This time, I felt anxious on the way to the club and attempted relaxation breathing techniques which had only mild effects. I reminded myself to see this as a low-pressure opportunity to test the progress of my mental skills. Re-orienting my appraisal did not change how I performed in the beginning of the session. While fencing I tried grounding techniques but could not stop negative self-talk between bouts. Finally, I accepted that I was anxious and making assumptions about the coach's judgement and stayed in that more negative emotional state as a motivation. While using this threat appraisal worked that time, I think constantly accepting the distorted thoughts reinforces the pattern and would not be a habit I would encourage in my future clients.

Relaxation

Relaxation has not historically been a priority in my athletic pursuits because I function best when I am intensely pursuing goals. Additionally, I rarely present with burnout symptoms, so I have not had a reason to curb this behavior. I think many athletes struggle with the idea that relaxation is unproductive. In fact, an Iraqi journal recently published an article citing relaxation as one of the lowest scoring psychological skills in the group of fencers studied, meaning they were not confident in the skill or declined to use it (Ghadhban & Faroud, 2025). For the purposes of this project, I chose to focus on incidental relaxation, such as feeling tension in my lower extremities during a bout. As an experiment, I tried to notice the signs of physical arousal or tension in more mundane life experiences. For example, while watching a television show meant to induce arousal, I tried to notice any areas of tension in my body and the rhythm of my breath. Then I intentionally focused on relaxing those areas while also remaining cognizant of the content of the show. For example, while waiting to find out who would exit a reality game show, I found that I would press my legs together in anticipation. So, I took breaths to ease out the tension while staying visually focused on the show. This has been a surprisingly useful technique that I am able to translate into the fencing context.

I viewed relaxation, like stress management, through the lens of the cusp-catastrophe model (Hardy, 1990) for the purposes of the PPEP. I concede that I may benefit from learning how to “relax” more in general, but the time constraints of this project made a philosophical change an unrealistic goal. I planned to use relaxation to manage physiological arousal (I used mindfulness to manage cognitive anxiety.) Managing the finite level of optimal physiological arousal is imperative for someone with high cognitive anxiety according to the cusp catastrophe model (Hardy, 1990). Where I may not yet be fully in control of cognitive anxiety (and may

never be), controlling physiological arousal could be more immediately impactful in a short period. After practicing the noticing tension and intentionally relaxing body parts for a few days out of the sport context, I was able to recognize these somatic anxiety markers during fencing bouts and quickly alleviate the sensation, at least enough for it cease interfering with the technical and tactical processes. In fact, I believe it directly contributed to winning a bout against an opponent I tend to lose to which provided a much desired sense of accomplishment.

Imagery

Before reading the chapter on imagery, I thought imagery and visualization were synonymous. When I learned *visualization* as a figure skater, it was presented as another repetition tool for a sport that relies heavily on muscle memory to perform repetitive precision tasks. We were directed to visualize executing our programs (routines) perfectly every night before going to bed. I think partly due to the nature of my adolescent athlete generation and partly due to the culture of figure skating, emotional imagery did not factor into the equation because figure skaters are “supposed to” only emote out to the audience and judges, not acknowledge having any themselves. I also did not think about the difference between internal and external image perspective. In creating an imagery plan for myself, I realized that I have only ever used external imagery views. Vealey and Forlenza (2021) note this view is best for precision tasks, so it was interesting that I automatically used that view for skating. However, they note internal imagery views serve tactical and reaction-based sports better, so I have made a point to switch to only internal views until I have mastered that skill.

As a figure skater, I was taught to suppress any and all emotion as a performance control mechanism. Stress and anxiety do happen (to purportedly weak skaters) and should therefore be ignored. My generation is now coaching, and I think doing a better job of supporting athletes in

their natural states, as we have seen the long-term mental health detriments to suppression.

Reading the Vealey and Forlenza (2021) post and then the discussion posts supporting the use of negative imagery inspired me to take a twofold approach to imagery: 1.) mental practice of “problem” skills and 2.) mental rehearsal of competition context intrusive thoughts. The goal of the first approach would be to enhance consistency of skills execution, and the goal of the second approach is to improve self-confidence.

The Vealey and Forlenza (2021) chapter introduces the idea that imagery should be both poly-sensory and simulate the emotions that may occur in the sport context, which is a new concept for me. More specifically, Zur and colleagues (2019) showed that anger can be effectively simulated by fencers using imagery, where the researchers aroused anger in order to study the relationship it has on fencing performance. While the findings of the study, that anger generally negatively impacts fine motor precision but can sometimes enhance speed and power skills, are not related to the direct benefits of imagery, the methodology of the study shows how effective imagery can be in simulating contextual emotions. Having only used visualization previously as a tool for muscle memory, I was also interested in using imagery for skill acquisition and adjustment. So, using William and colleagues (2013) as a guide, I created a competition imagery script to start using for the purpose of emotional regulation (see Appendix D). For skill-learning imagery, I planned to image singular attack or defense skills that my coach is currently adjusting. These imagery sessions are quick and occur during off-times or right before or after executing a skill in a lesson.

The most honest assessment of my imagery practice is that I appreciate the concept and accept the neuropsychological explanation of why it works, but I do not have the patience for it. The skill enhancement imagery instances have been consistent and helpful in acquiring the

kinesthetic sense for the skills. Those will be permanent and continuous psychological skills practices. However, I was not motivated to complete the competition simulation imagery because I lose patience and therefore focus before the end of the image. So, the time it takes and my fear of failure have reduced how often I use this type of imagery. Ironically, this means this type of imagery is exactly the psychological skill that I should be working on because I tend to lose focus during the longer direct elimination bouts where I become cognitively fatigued. In skating, you execute the same set of skills in the same order, every time, but fencing has almost infinite sequencing possibilities. After feedback, I started practicing shorter and easier images. For example, during lessons I recreated the kinesthetic image of executing a skill flawlessly immediately after and before I did the next repetition. I also tried to recreate the image of the beach path in the video that I use as a relaxation technique. Both strategies were more successful than my original imagery attempts. And, they were impactful in creating an opportunity for improving my self-efficacy.

Professional Philosophy

The biggest impact the PPEP project has had on my professional philosophy is learning how all the mental skills are interconnected and therefore need a framework for translating them to the client. The foundational skill is goal setting where all other skills can grow and lead back to. It is the “why” of the skills. Then I see self-talk and imagery as the anchors of mental performance because they enhance confidence. Concentration/focus and relaxation supported through mindfulness and stress management are the pillars which facilitate and are facilitated by self-talk and imagery. Going through the process of incorporating different mental skills throughout this project, I see the value in a systematic approach. Psychological skills training (PST) programs are ideally implemented in the pre-season (Weinberg & Williams, 2021). Even if

I am unsure of which skills would best help the client at a given time, there needs to be some organization to how we prioritize learning or strengthening skills. As a standard initiation to my psychoeducational services, I will have clients both fill out the assessment forms such as the Athletic Skills Coping Inventory (Smith et al. 1995) and Test of Performance Strategies (TOPS, Thomas et al., 1999) and conduct an initial interview with a motivational interviewing philosophy to assess a client's needs as well as willingness to change. Wrapping up the PPEP, I would like to create a curriculum with information and worksheets for each skill as a unit that can be either done sequentially but also have each unit as a standalone device.

Additionally, I see the merit in identifying a counseling philosophy as part of forming your professional identity and approach to providing services (Keegan, 2010). The experience of using the PPEP mental skills to enhance my own performance gave me insight into my which consulting philosophy best fits my approach to services. This project in combination with the counseling theories class led me to conclude that the theoretical approach should match the client's needs, personality and stage of change (Prochaska & Norcross, 2018). Those factors should determine whether the interventions are client-led versus consultant-led. For example, if a fencing club contracted my services, I would likely need to take a consultant-led approach because the coaches will be the ones responsible for maintaining any PST programs. Therefore, I would primarily act solely as an educator. For individual clients, I think the philosophic approach is more nuanced and may alter as the relationship develops. During the process of the PPEP I have at times liked the control of creating my own techniques and accountability methods, but there were also times where I felt that I just needed an "expert" to tell me what to do. Athletes are instruction oriented, so I think there is value in taking the authoritative role in some

circumstances, especially if the client is resistant or youth athletes. Most importantly, taking a holistic approach gives the most flexibility in providing SPP services.

Ethics

General Ethical Standard Six (AASP, 2024) addresses personal problems and conflicts and calls for personal awareness about practitioner impairments. Upon reflection of the PPEP, I think I may be susceptible to occupational burnout because I am a perfectionist (Johnson et al., 2025) and typically do not prioritize recovery practices (Magdaleno & Meyer, 2023). I did not consider including recovery measures in my weekly plans, so by the week after the tournament, I needed a few days to mentally and physically recover. Johnson and colleagues (2025) suggested that autonomy over personal time could help avoid occupational burnout. Abiding by the Ethical Standard Six (AASP, 2024) means that I may need to take a temporary leave of absence from practicing if I become burnt out, which could then violate Ethical Standard Seven (AASP, 2024) of doing no harm because clients may feel abandoned. Therefore, I need to include recovery measures in my professional planning.

Another ethical challenge that came to light in the process of the PPEP is the personal issues that may arise from working with fencing clients as a current competitor. My fencing participation is both a professional credential as well as marketing tool, and I have already had interest in my services from the fencing community once I have professional competence. Practically it makes sense to work with this population, but I recognize that it must be handled delicately to remain ethical. For example, I do not think it would be appropriate to take one-on-one clients who I may compete against (female-identifying epee fencers ages thirteen and above) or members of any clubs I represent. But it may be ethical for them to attend seminars. This will

be an ethical challenge that would be best explored during mentorship and in discussions with colleagues.

Multicultural Awareness

The importance of cultural competence is a current and salient issue in sport and performance psychology. All four courses I have taken so far at the University of Western States have included units and learning materials on multicultural awareness demonstrating the importance of cultural competence in graduate training. Martens and colleagues (2000) discuss the potential effects of cultural incompetence on SPP practice such as overgeneralizations high attrition rates and call for multicultural training in graduate programs. Considering the psychoeducational nature of my professional consulting role, I think it is important to acknowledge cultural contexts of the competing performers but also the coaching performers. Coaches are often the deliverers of psychoeducational programs because they are the day-to-day leaders in the sport organism (Weinberg & Williams, 2021). A large portion of the coaching community in both figure skating and fencing are not American, which I believe is reflective of many sport environments in the United States. It is important to acknowledge cultural differences in creating interventions and seminars. Using the example of my fencing coach who grew up in the Soviet Era state-sponsored sport system, she may not respond well to a coaching seminar that includes singling out student with specific positive feedback. Interestingly, I found that coaches who come from an authoritarian sport system are either completely committed to that type of leadership or have gone to the complete opposite, submissive style because they are afraid of American parents and “getting in trouble” with organizations.

Referral

This project solidified my belief that there are two different approaches to sport and performance psychology: clinical and psychoeducational. I was first introduced to this idea in the McHenry and colleagues (2022) distinguishing between the clinical mental health role and mental performance enhancement role. I am leaning into the distinction between pursuing a doctorate in education rather than a PhD or PsyD and am planning to use the professional title of mental high-performance educator or similar. In navigating the mental skills (many of which I have used before) I found that the knowledge translation from resources practices felt like a separate experience from investigating how my non-performance life was affecting the performance aspect. A few times I turned to my personal psychotherapist to discuss if some personality traits or past experiences may need to be handled outside of the sport context. So, I see the line of referral delineated when interventions and strategies within the performance context are not effective for mediating state or trait issues. As an analogy, teachers and sport coaches should have psychopathology awareness and competence (in the case of teachers) to assess the overall mental health states of their students, but they are not actively involved in clinical psychopathology, even if they frequently engage in emotional release conversations with their students. The same as it would be unethical for a teacher to diagnose and treat mental health symptoms in students, it would not be appropriate for someone with a psychoeducational role to either.

Silver Linings: A Final Mental Skills Reflection

I recently listened to a *Happiness Lab* podcast episode where Dr. Laurie Santos (2019) spoke with figure skater Michelle Kwan about how she handled “losing” the Olympic gold medal at two Olympic Games. The premise of the episode was that our perception of success is

determined by our standards of achievement. For Michelle Kwan, she looked at her Olympic Medals as “winning” the silver and bronze medals instead of “losing” the gold medal. Most interestingly, she spoke about how her coaches could never get her to leave the ice after practice because she loved skating so much. It made me think about what the purpose is of my fencing. While I found the PPEP project to be greatly impactful on my fencing, it became mentally exhausting to think about improving constantly for weeks at a time. To me, practice is a necessary means to achieving my goals and an important part of my athletic identity schema. I want to the Veteran World Championships, so I have to make the most of every practice. However, after listening to this episode I realized that I rarely “have fun” when I practice because I view fun and hard work dichotomously. I decided the last week of the project to take a break from the worksheets and trying to utilize all the skills and to focus on enjoying the time fencing. It was one of the best weeks of fencing I have had in about six months. As athletes and practitioners, I think we can get preoccupied with the need for constant performance improvement, and that is certainly the core of why we do it. But I would like to use this experience to remind myself as both an athlete and professional that enjoying the moment can be just as valuable as making the most of the moment.

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Appendix A: July 21-27

AUTOMATIC SELF-TALK QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SPORTS (ASTQS)

INSTRUCTIONS

On the following questionnaire, there are phrases describing athletes' thoughts. Please use the rating scale below to indicate, based on your latest competitions, thoughts you usually experience or intentionally use while performing. Your responses will be kept in **absolute confidence**. In other words, your individual answers will not be shown to anyone. Please read each statement carefully, and then choose the correct response for you by circling the appropriate number.

0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = very often

1.	I am going to lose	0	1	2	3	4
2.	I want to stop	0	1	2	3	4
3.	I am thirsty	0	1	2	3	4
4.	My body is not in a good condition	0	1	2	3	4
5.	I'm wrong again	0	1	2	3	4
6.	I want to get out of here	0	1	2	3	4
7.	What will I do later tonight	0	1	2	3	4
8.	I am tired	0	1	2	3	4
9.	I am not as good as the others	0	1	2	3	4
10.	I can't keep going	0	1	2	3	4
11.	I am hungry	0	1	2	3	4
12.	Today I 'suck'	0	1	2	3	4
13.	I am not going to reach my goal	0	1	2	3	4
14.	I am fed-up	0	1	2	3	4
15.	I want to take a shower	0	1	2	3	4
16.	My body doesn't help me today	0	1	2	3	4
17.	I cannot concentrate	0	1	2	3	4
18.	I think I'll stop trying	0	1	2	3	4
19.	My legs/arms are shaking from tiredness	0	1	2	3	4
20.	I am not going to make it	0	1	2	3	4
21.	What will others think of my poor performance	0	1	2	3	4

1	22	Let's go	0	1	2	3	4
2	23	Relax	0	1	2	3	4
3	24	I believe in me	0	1	2	3	4
4	25	Concentrate on your goal	0	1	2	3	4
5	26	Power	0	1	2	3	4
6	27	Don't get upset	0	1	2	3	4
7	28	I am very well prepared	0	1	2	3	4
8	29	Focus on what you need to do now	0	1	2	3	4
9	30	Give 100%	0	1	2	3	4
10	31	Calm down	0	1	2	3	4
11	32	I feel strong	0	1	2	3	4
12	33	Concentrate on your game	0	1	2	3	4
13	34	Do your best	0	1	2	3	4
14	35	No stress	0	1	2	3	4
15	36	I can make it	0	1	2	3	4
16	37	Focus on your technique	0	1	2	3	4
17	38	Strong	0	1	2	3	4
18	39	I believe in my abilities	0	1	2	3	4
19	40	Concentrate	0	1	2	3	4

Scoring

Negative Self-talk	Worry	15	I am going to lose (1) 3 I'm wrong again (5) 3 I am not as good as the others (9) 2 I am not going to reach my goal (13) 3 I cannot concentrate (17) 1 I am not going to make it (20) 0 What will others think of my poor performance (21) 3
	Disengagement	2	I want to stop (2) 1 I want to get out of here (6) 0 I think I'll stop trying (18) 0 I can't keep going (10) 0 I am fed-up (14) 1
	Somatic fatigue	4	My body is not in a good condition (4) 0 I am tired (8) 2 Today I 'suck' (12) 0 My legs/arms are shaking from tiredness (19) 2 My body doesn't help me today (16) 0
	Irrelevant thoughts	1	I am thirsty (3) 1 What will I do later tonight (7) 0 I am hungry (11) 0 I want to take a shower (15) 0
	Psych-up	8	Let's go (1) 4 Power (5) 1 Give 100% (9) 1 Do your best (13) 2 Strong (17) 0
Positive Self-talk	Anxiety control	3	Relax (2) 2 Don't get upset (6) 1 Calm down (10) 0 No stress (14) 0
	Confidence	9	I believe in me (3) 2 I am very well prepared (7) 3 I feel strong (11) 2 I can make it (15) 1 I believe in my abilities (18) 1
	Instruction	9	Concentrate on your goal (4) 1 Focus on what you need to do now (8) 4 Concentrate on your game (12) 2 Focus on your technique (16) 2 Concentrate (19) 0

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SELF- TALK SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT

DIRECTIONS: To truly change your self-talk, you'll want to have a specific script and pre-designed affirmations that speak directly to success in your chosen performance area. On Section 1 below, you'll see the 7 possible purposes of self-talk. Identify the specific purposes that your self-talk script is being designed to attain by selecting each selected purpose that you want to emphasize. When constructing your script, you must select a minimum of three purposes, but you may select all seven if you like! Next, for each purpose, construct specific thoughts, affirmations, or counterarguments that convey the nature of that purpose for you. In Section 2, you'll find examples of ideas and affirmations that might be useful for each purpose, but it's always best if you write them in a way that best suits you. For example, if you'd never actually say "I'm a talented person with skills and abilities that allow me to be as successful as I want to be in life," use that idea to construct something that you would actually say like "No matter how tough things get, I've got the ability to work through them and be successful." You should also feel free to borrow quotes or mantras from other sources (e.g., poems, books, slogans). Remember, this is about what works for YOU – this is part of the risk-taking you're being asked to do for the PPEP. How would you want your future clients to attack this worksheet?

Section 1: Purposes for Script Development

1. Remind yourself of your assets, strengths, and desirable personal qualities
2. Establish priorities and goals as well as action plans for how to achieve them
3. Recall past successes, particularly in similar situations or when overcoming obstacles, failure, or adversity
4. Emphasize the quantity and quality of your preparation
5. Appraise all situations as challenges rather than obstacles and implement effective problem-solving strategies.
6. Reframe negative thoughts
7. Attribute success to hard work and improving ability; attribute failure to something controllable (the need to work harder, improve mental prep, or develop skills more fully)

not enough

Do already

Do already

Section 2: Sample Positive Thoughts, Affirmations, and Counterarguments

1. Remind yourself of your assets, strengths, and desirable personal qualities:
 - (a) I'm a talented person with the skills and abilities that allow me to be as successful as I want to be in life.
 - (b) My background and past experiences are irrelevant because today offers me a fresh start to explore my full potential
 - (c) My intelligence and physical skills along with my dedication and sacrifice will allow me to become a success in sport and life

(a) I am a good fencer

(b) Today is new tournament / practice

b.) from 4

d.) I am a
world-class
athlete

e.) I am strong

- (d) I have the ability to overcome all obstacles and roadblocks in my life with hard work, dedication, and perseverance
- (e) Ultimately, I'll be judged by "who I am" not "what I accomplish"
- (f) I have the ability to make myself into a better performer who can help my team in many ways
- (g) I celebrate today by looking my best
- (h) I enjoy good health, energy, enthusiasm, and vitality today
- (i) I'm a happy person who radiates positive energy and enthusiasm. I love to smile.
- (j) I have rich, rewarding relationships with my close friends and family
- (k) I like who I am and enjoy being me. I like the person I see in the mirror
- (l) My body is a wonderful vehicle for full and free self-expression
- (m) All my thoughts, words and actions are creative, dynamic and powerful
- (n) I am an open channel for the greater expression of excellence and creativity.

2. Establish priorities and goals as well as action plans for how to achieve them:

a.) I pursue
excellence

b.) I am
successful

c.) I will be
on the Vet
World team

d.) Today I
will push
myself

- (a) I have a dream or vision of what I want in life
- (b) I see myself as successful – having everything I want in sport/life and achieving all of my goals
- (c) My goal is to become the best I am capable of becoming
- (d) I have set my goals, established my priorities, and developed action plans to make them a reality
- (e) Nothing good comes easy. The best things in life require hard work, dedication, and sacrifice
- (f) Dreams become reality through hard work and sacrifice
- (g) I have the time, energy, and wisdom to accomplish all of my goals
- (h) I dare to dream ways to turn my career and this team around
- (i) This is a "can do," "will do," and "get things done" day.
- (j) Today I am taking control of my life and making sure I achieve my high priority goals
- (k) I eat nutritiously and exercise regularly in order to keep my body fit and healthy
- (l) I will use more and more of myself until eventually I more fully achieve my own potential.

3. Recall past successes in similar situations or how you overcame adversity:

- (a) I have been successful in similar situations in the past
- (b) Even though this is a difficult challenge, I have overcome equally difficult obstacles in the past and I can do it again.
- (c) Failure makes me stronger by helping to identify areas for improvement
- (d) I know it's only a matter of time until my hard work pays off and I become even more successful

- (e) Nothing succeeds like success and I've had a lot of successful experiences in this type of situation that give me the confidence to be successful again today.
- (f) Overcoming failure and adversity requires a commitment plan effective strategies to eliminate my weaknesses

4. Emphasize the quantity and quality of your preparation:

- c.) I am the hardest working boxer*
- d.) All of my challenges have been necessary lessons more to (#1)*
- e.) I have practiced enough to fence well*
- f.) Challenges fortify me*
- g.) My training has made my mind powerful*
- (a) Nobody works harder than I do, and at crunch time I'll be in better condition and more willing to pay the price than my opponent
 - (b) My physical, mental, technical, and tactical training were carefully designed to prepare me perfectly to excel today
 - (c) No one will ever out-work me in practice. I take great pride in my work ethic and it's a great source of confidence when encountering adversity.
 - (d) My coach has taught me to understand my opponent's game and I have the ability to counter those tactics successfully
 - (e) I have prepared myself well to maximize my strengths and minimize my weaknesses
 - (f) I get a little bit better every day in practice, moving a step closer to being the best performer I can be

5. Appraise all situations as challenges not obstacles problem-solve effectively:

- (a) Everyone encounters failure and adversity. Champions rise above adversity by viewing problems as opportunities for excellence
- (b) I recognize that mistakes are a normal part of learning. As long as I'm learning and trying to get better, mistakes are inevitable. I will look at each mistake as an opportunity to learn and grow as I strive for excellence.
- (c) I will approach each problem as a challenge – an opportunity to learn and get better as a person and as an athlete
- (d) No matter how bleak the outlook or how difficult the obstacle, I will accept the challenge to perform my best and come up with a strategy that will allow me to be successful
- (e) I realize that true fulfillment comes from looking at every situation as a challenge to take another positive step forward toward reaching my potential
- (f) I'll approach today as an opportunity to become interested in and make something creative and special out of every situation, no matter how difficult or mundane.
- (g) I take constructive criticism well, using that feedback to make myself a better person and athlete

6. Reframe negative thoughts:

a.) I am fearless

b.) I am peaceful

c.) I accept
what I can't
control

d.) It doesn't matter
if other people
think I'm good.
I know I am
a skilled boxer.

- (a) "Labeling is disabling" so I'll accept myself and others without judgment
- (b) I'll concentrate on doing my best right now because I can't change what has happened in the past or what may happen in the future. All I can control is giving my best effort to strive for excellence at this moment.
- (c) I can only take responsibility for myself and my own actions.
- (d) I accept what I can't control. I can't control other people's opinions of me or how my teammates play. I can't control my given ability or how quickly I learn skills. I can't control the officiating. I CAN control my effort level, attitude, mood, and performance. I'll concentrate on what I can control.
- (e) Life is often unfair. I'll concentrate on the things I can control and on doing my best in those situations. Persistence and problem-solving pays off.

7. Attribute success to hard failure to effort of need for improvement:

- (a) I am responsible for my own success – my hard work and effort have paid off
- (b) Working hard and trusting my ability allows me to continue to achieve success as I progress up the competitive ladder
- (c) I know my hard work and consistent practice have paid dividends and allowed me to achieve success
- (d) This failure is temporary and can be overcome with hard work and persistent skill development
- (e) Failure will not get the best of me. I know that momentary lack of success can be overcome through effective problem-solving
- (f) All failure is surmountable with enough time, patience, hard work, and problem-solving.
- (g) When confronted with failure, I focus on the things I can control such as trying harder, getting better prepared mentally, developing my skills more fully, or trusting the abilities I've worked so hard to build.

SMART TALK GENERAL SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT FORM

DIRECTIONS: Now that you've read Chapter 14 in the text and looked over Sections 1 and 2 above, use this form to develop your personal script for your chosen performance area. In the sections below, write out each of the purposes you have chosen to focus on along with the specific thoughts, affirmation, or counterarguments you have developed to achieve that purpose. You may have many statements for a single purpose, or many purposes with a few key statements for each one – whichever you like. Come up with powerful statements for the beginning and ending of your script – these can be quotes, mantras, or statements you've used in the past that really motivate you to achieve your best. Finally, transfer these short statements into paragraph form – a fully written script to read or record for yourself. You will submit the completed version of this handout and your final Self-Talk script as part of the requirements for Checkpoint #2, due at the end of Week 5.

EXAMPLE:

Purpose #1:

Reminders of strengths and weaknesses

Specific Thoughts:

- 1) I have the ability, dedication and work ethic to excel in whatever I do*
 - 2) I am a talented person with skills and abilities that allow me to be successful*
 - 3) All my thoughts, words, and actions are creative, dynamic and powerful*
-

LET'S GET STARTED!

Introductory Statement:

Just fence

Purpose #1:

Reminders of assets and strengths

Specific Thoughts:

- 1) I am a good fencer*
-

- 2) I am a world-class athlete.
- 3) I am strong
- 4) Today is a new tournament / practice
- 5)

Purpose #2:

Establish goals and priorities

Specific Thoughts:

- 1) I pursue excellence.
- 2) I am successful already
- 3) I will be on the Vex World Team
- 4) Today I will push my limits
- 5)

Purpose #3:

Feel confident about the quality of training

Specific Thoughts:

- 1) I am the hardest working fencer
- 2) Challenges fortify me.
- 3) I have practiced enough to fence well
- 4) I have trained my mind to be a powerful weapon
- 5)

Purpose #4:

Reframe negative thoughts

Specific Thoughts:

- I am fearless
- 1) I am powerful
 - 2) I accept what I cannot control
 - 3) How other people judge me doesn't matter to me.

4)

5)

Purpose #5:

Specific Thoughts:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Purpose #6:

Specific Thoughts:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Purpose #7:

Specific Thoughts:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Over

Conclusion Phrase, Statement:

Surprise yourself

Self-Talk Script

Surprise Yourself.

I am a good fencer and a world-class athlete. I am strong. Today is a new tournament/practice. I will be on the Veteran World Team when the time comes. I am already successful because I pursue excellence. Today I will push my limits. I am confident in the quality of my training because I have worked as hard as I can. I have practiced enough to fence well, and I have trained my mind to be a powerful weapon. My challenges have fortified me. I am powerful. How other people judge me does not matter to me, and I accept what I cannot control. I am fearless.

Just Fence.

Self-Talk Affirmations

I am a good fencer.

I am fearless.

I trust myself.

I don't follow. I arrive.

Strike like a whip.

IN AND OUT OF THE ZONE

For this week, please complete this worksheet for your current performance in your chosen performance area. For each characteristic noted below, identify how it manifests (i.e., how it feels or how it's used) during great and not-so great performances. For example, if your chosen performance area is "parenting", your self-talk during a peak performance might include "I love my family and my chance to shape my daughter's life" while during a poor performance, your self-talk might be closer to "I don't know why I even bother – she never listens to me anyway." Complete and retain this worksheet for submission during Checkpoint #2, due at the end of Week 5.

	PEAK/FLOW PERFORMANCE	POOR/CHOKE PERFORMANCE
1. Physical Condition:	Easy breath Loose but strong muscles	Tight muscles (like mud) Quick labored breath
2. Skills/Techniques:	Automatic / Fluid	Sequential / Analytical
3. Mental Preparation:	Ready / Calm	Too many tactics
4. Goals:	↓ process goal ↓ performance goal	Big Big performance goal
5. Self Talk:	↓ touch at a time "I can"	"I should" statements
6. Concentration/Focus:	Dynamic	Tunnel vision
7. Self Confidence:	Calm rather than confident	low, fear of failure
8. Motivation:	High process / perform.	High performance only
9. Effort:	High	High
10. Relaxation Level:	medium between bouts	none at all
11. Energy Level:	High	High
12. Ability to Handle Mistakes:	Brush it off	Have to intentionally reset
13. Feelings of Control:	Self - high environment - low	Self - high need to control environment
14. Positive Mental Attitude:	neutral	low

Mental Training Evaluation

PRACTICE Week Ending: 7/26

How satisfied were you with your effort in practice this week?

out of 10

6 - missed gym session

How satisfied were you with your practice performance this week?

5

How well were you able to identify your optimal level of energy for practice this week?

8

How well were you able to identify your optimal mental attitude for practice this week?

8

How well were you able to identify your optimal self-confidence in practice this week?

5

How well were you able to identify your optimal levels of focus and concentration for practice this week?

4

How well were you able to stay motivated and give your best effort in practice this week?

7

How effective were you in making practice fun this week?

5

cut of 5

Weekly Goal Log

Weekly Goals:	Current Level	Goal Level	M	T	W	Th	F	Notes
1. Focus on <u>trusting</u> instincts	1	5	3	/	4	/	3	What does that mean in action?
2. See every opponent as a blank slate	2	5	2	/	4	/	2	Did not work well in competition simulation
3. Try coach Stevens tactics	2	5	2	/	4	/	4	More patience w/ games & two temp actors

Weekly Confidence Log
(Note successful counterarguments and daily affirmations)

Monday	I am a good friend
Tuesday	I feel stronger. I did it despite feeling unmotivated
Wednesday	I listened
Thursday	
Friday	I came back because I took my time.
	I fought
Saturday	
Sunday	

Weekly Imagery Log

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Type							
(Internal or External)							
Vividness							
(Rate 1-10)							
Control							
(Rate 1-10)							
Uses							
(See Below)							
Time spent							

Uses Chart:

1 - Prepractice Readiness/Focus	5 - Practicing a Specific Strategy
2 - Precompetition Readiness/Focus	6 - Error Correction
3 - Goal Programming/Goal CD	7 - Site Familiarity
4 - Practicing Skills or Plays	

Did not focus on imagery
this week.

Appendix B: July 28-August 3

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Step 1. Define your Dream

What accomplishment/ achievement/ experience would be worth your very best effort?

Veteran World Team in Vex40

What would you attempt if you knew it was impossible to fail?

Learning as many languages as possible

What would you go for if you knew this was your very last chance (your last season playing a sport, your last year in school, your last year on earth)?

Medal in Division 2 Nationals

Step 2: Know where you are right now

"I have trouble performing well when..."

I am focused on qualifying for Nationals

I judge my opponent as less competent, and think I "should" win

"The most frustrating moment for me is..."

Not performing to the best of my ability

Losing to less skilled opponents

"I get myself screwed up when..."

I worry about how my coaches or opponents perceive/judge my ability and competence.

"I perform my best when..."

I overthink about tactics and execution

I trust my instincts. I go one touch at a time.

I don't judge myself or my opponent.

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Step 3: Be honest about what you need to develop

In order to achieve my dream, the four most important areas I need to improve in are:

- A. Fear of failure
- B. Overthinking/analyzing (Tunnel vision)
- C. Judging opponents
- D. ~~Judging myself~~ Use my arm first

Step 4: Make a plan for daily improvement

For each of the improvement areas listed above, identify 4 specific actions that you can take on a regular basis to help yourself improve.

- A. 1. Read self-talk statement everyday
2. Make 1 action in every bout as soon as it comes to mind, even if it is "wrong"
3. Watch 1 bout per week (mine or youtube)
- B. 1. Choose 1 attack per practice to do in every bout
2. Choose 1 defense (parry) to do in every bout
3. Focus on the target of my point
4. Watch elbow down on my opponent
- C. 1. Say opponent's dominant hand & grip style to myself (no name)
2. Say which action I'm working on today
3. Focus on where my point is
4. Focus on my footwork variation
- D. 1. "I am a good fencer" before and after bouts
2. Target fliches 10 times / week
3. Target lunges 10 times / week
4. Reaction lights 3 minutes lunge / week
Reaction lights 3 minutes fliche / week

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Step 4: Make a plan for daily improvement (cont'd)

For each of the areas listed above, identify 4 specific statements about yourself that you want to be true ("my lefty shot is a canon", "I bench 250 eight times", "I get more and more confident as the game goes on", "I'm great at learning from each of my mistakes")

- A. 1. I am fearless
2. I know that I can win
3. I go for the first touch
4. I am confident for the entire tournament
- B. 1. I trust my instinct
2. I choose the best attack
3. I choose the best defense
4. I have excellent technique
- C. 1. My opponents are only obstacles to overcome.
2. I have a winning average
3. I tailor my plan to my opponent
4. I execute the actions I do best
- D. 1. My left arm is lightning.
2. My left arm is an arrow
3. I hit the target I'm aiming for.
4. My left arm propels my body

CONCENTRATION DRILLS WORKSHEET

DIRECTIONS: Improving concentration is a challenging task, from choosing the right assessment drills to developing the right strategies to implement. Chapter 15 in the text offers a wide variety of concentration assessments on pages 320-322, and strategies for managing external and internal distractions on pages 323-329. This activity includes two parts: In Part 1, you'll assess the current struggles in your own attention and concentration with respect to your chosen performance area. In Part 2, you'll implement 2-3 strategies to address those struggles.

PART 1:

Find a quiet space to think about your chosen area for performance improvement. When it comes to your ability to focus during your "performance" in this activity, what types of distractions do you generally experience? Are they internal external, or a combination of both? Are they the result of a lack of preparation, a lack of motivation, building frustrations, a combination of these, or something else entirely? In the space below, describe the results of your personal concentration assessment:

- 1.) Focus too intensely on my plan of action and forget
to pay attention to the big picture. (internal distraction from external)
 - 2.) Distracted by how many hours I need to work to get
certain placement. (external distracting from internal)
 - 3.) Not understanding/hearing my coaches calls, feeling frustrated;
or worried they think I'm intentionally not listening (external + internal)
 - 4.) Concentration (mental) fatigue from overfocus
 - 5.) Distracted by tactics and lose focus on technique (external + internal)
- Preparation & motivation are rarely issues. Frustrations about
not meeting my self-imposed expectations diverts my focus.
My coach does not speak English as her first language,
so that aspect is beyond my control other than creating ^{pre-set} one-word or short
commands.

PART 2:

- 1) Now that you've determined the types of challenges you experience in your ability to concentrate, select 2-3 strategies that you believe are appropriate to address those challenges. You may select from among the strategies in pages 323-329, but be sure to personalize each one to suit your chosen performance area.

Identify your three chosen strategies below:

Things I use already:

- Pre-competition routine
- Simulated competition
- Same cues/triggers

New Things to try:

- ① Centering weight & point position
- ② TIC ("shoulds") TOC ("next point")
- ③ Focus/Refocus skills

- 2) For the remainder of the term, execute your plan for each strategy. This may involve downloading apps for centering or biofeedback, identifying cues and triggers that you can use while engaging in the activity, developing and implementing performance routines, etc.

- ① Log for bouts
- ② Make TOC statements cards
- ③ Watch clock, piano video game

- 3) Keep a record of your concentration practice for inclusion in your final PPEP submission

Vacation Travel Week

Weekly Goal Log

Weekly Goals:	Current Level	Goal Level	M	T	W	Th	F	Notes
1. Read self-talk statement every morning and every evening	0	5	x	x	✓	✓	✓	
2. Imagery every night	1	5	x	✓	x	✓	x	
3. Relax & reset!	0	4	2	3	3	4	4	

Weekly Confidence Log
 (Note successful counterarguments and daily affirmations)

Monday	I look really nice today.
Tuesday	I'm having a good time.
	All parents get frustrated
Wednesday	Just go with it.
Thursday	Let it happen
Friday	(redirecting to think about my new cat)
Saturday	
Sunday	

Weekly Imagery Log

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Type (Internal or External)		Ext.		Int.			
Vividness (Rate 1-10)		5		6			
Control (Rate 1-10)		2		5			
Uses (See Below)		4		5			
Time spent							

Uses Chart:

- 1 - Prepractice Readiness/Focus
- 2 - Precompetition Readiness/Focus
- 3 - Goal Programming/Goal CD
- 4 - Practicing Skills or Plays

- 5 - Practicing a Specific Strategy
- 6 - Error Correction
- 7 - Site Familiarity

Weekly Relaxation/Energization Training Log
(Rate Tension and Energy Levels from 1-10 for each session)

Circle One	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
(R)	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: <u>2</u> Energy: <u>7</u> Time: <u>10am</u>	Tension: <u>3</u> Energy: <u>6</u> Time: <u>10-4pm</u>	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
R	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: <u>6</u> Energy: <u>3</u> Time: <u>11am</u>	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
(E)	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
R	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
E	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
R	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____
E	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____	Tension: _____ Energy: _____ Time: _____

↓
 travel
 +
 check-in
 dad

↓
 mentally
 over
 vacation
 activities

↓
 travel
 day

Mental Training Evaluation

PRACTICE Week Ending: 8/2

How satisfied were you with your effort in practice this week?

Somewhat

How satisfied were you with your practice performance this week?

n/a

How well were you able to identify your optimal level of energy for practice this week?

Very.

How well were you able to identify your optimal mental attitude for practice this week?

Very well

How well were you able to identify your optimal self-confidence in practice this week?

had space to think about it

How well were you able to identify your optimal levels of focus and concentration for practice this week?

Very happy about space to reflect without fencing

How well were you able to stay motivated and give your best effort in practice this week?

not well

How effective were you in making practice fun this week?

make vacation fun!

Appendix C: August 4-10

Weekly Goal Log

Date: 8/14

Weekly Goal:

Clear my mind ~~be~~ during
hours

Three Actions I'm Going to Take:

1. Create holistic cues

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
		X			completed Wed used wed

2. Tailor self-talk to confidence phrases

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
X		X			*Wed "I have won already" *

3. Focus on process only during lessons

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
~		X			* Frustrated on Monday

Holistic Process Goal Worksheet

Name 3 to 5 technical corrections you are working on:

1. Retreating when parrying
2. Using my arm first
3. Watching the distance during bouts
4. Using my fingers to maneuver the blade
5. _____

For each listed correction choose one cue word from the description:

1. Retreat
2. Arm
3. Distance
4. Fingers
5. _____

Now, describe the feeling of the action as a whole in one word:

1. Back ☆
2. Pull ☆
3. Ready ☆
4. Forward / Small?
5. _____

Master Weekly Performance Tracker

Dates: 8/4 - 8/10

Tournament Week?: Yes

No

Practice 1 (Day: Mon.)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	<u>Ready to go</u>	<u>Distracted</u>	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	--------------------	-------------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

No expectations. Olga has a plan

What didn't work well today?

mentally tired from being behind on school
worried about cat

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

	Frustration over inconsistency
--	--------------------------------

Practice 2 (Day: Wed.)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	<u>Neutral</u>	Ready to go	<u>Distracted</u>	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	----------------	-------------	-------------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Rep S strategy for A

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

I've already won everything (repeat)	What am I doing wrong
---	-----------------------

Practice 3 (Day: Thurs) Traveled to camp

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

<u>Tired</u>	Neutral	<u>Ready to go</u>	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
--------------	---------	--------------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Fenced former coach very well. Enjoyed fencing new people

What didn't work well today?

Worrying about whether former coach was watching and judging

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

I've already won all of these bouts. (absence of opponent research)	
--	--

Practice 4 (Day: Fri)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

<u>Tired</u>	Neutral	Ready to go	<u>Distracted</u>	Anxious	Clear	Excited
--------------	---------	-------------	-------------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Mental prep

What didn't work well today?

King of the Hill, lost all but last one

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

	"I have this game."
--	---------------------

New mental or technical skills attempted:

- * Take away uncertainty by saying "I've already won"
- * Imagery to remove judgement

Reflections:

Perceived observers, perceived expectations

Sport Imagery Questionnaire

1=Never 7=Always

1. I imagine other athletes congratulating me on a good performance. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I image myself winning a medal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I image the audience applauding my performance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I image the atmosphere of receiving a medal (e.g., the pride, the excitement, etc.) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I image the atmosphere of winning a championship (e.g., the excitement that follows winning, etc.) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I image myself being interviewed as a champion 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. When I image a competition, I feel myself getting emotionally excited. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I image the excitement associated with competing. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I can re-create in my head the emotions I feel before I compete. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I imagine myself handling the stress and excitement of competitions and remaining calm. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. I image the stress and anxiety associated with competing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. When I image an event/game I am to participate in, I feel anxious 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. I can consistently control the image of physical skill 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. When imaging a particular skill, I consistently perform it perfectly in my mind 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. I can mentally make corrections to physical skills 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I can easily change an image of a skill. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. Before attempting a particular skill, I imagine myself performing it perfectly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. When learning a new skill, I imagine myself performing it perfectly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. I image alternative strategies in case my event/game plan fails. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I make up new plans/strategies in my head. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. I image each section of an event/game (e.g., offense vs. defense, fast vs. slow) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. I image myself continuing with my event/game plan, even when performing poorly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I imagine executing entire plays/programs/sections just the way I want them to happen in an event/game. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I imagine myself successfully following my event/game plan.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. I imagine myself being in control in difficult situations.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I image giving 100% during an event/game

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

27. I image myself to be focused during a challenging situation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. I image myself working successfully through tough situations.

(e.g., a power play, sore ankle, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. I image myself being mentally tough.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. I image myself appearing self-confident in front of my opponents.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Scoring Instructions

A factor analysis of the SIQ revealed five types of imagery use:

- (a) **Cognitive General (CG)**—imagery related to competitive strategies
- (b) **Cognitive Specific (CS)**—imagery directed toward skill development or production
- (c) **Motivational General Arousal (MG-A)**—imagery related to arousal, relaxation, and competitive anxiety
- (d) **Motivational General Mastery (MG-M)**—imagery representative of effective coping and confidence in challenging situations;
- (e) **Motivational Specific (MS)**—imagery that represents specific goals and goal-oriented behavior

MS: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6

MG-A: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12

CS: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18

CG: 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24

MG-M: 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30

Add specific item scores to find subscale scores.

*There is NO overall score (i.e., DO NOT add subscale scores together to find a total score)

MS: 30
MG-A: 18
CS: 17 → add more, change to my view
CG: 24
MG-M: 29

WORRY-STOPPER GRID

	Controllable Forces	Uncontrollable Forces
Important	Performing to the best of my ability Am I choosing the correct strategy Response: Act	What other people think about my ability Will a qualify for Nationals Response: Accept & Act
Not Important	Did I eat enough Response: Eliminate & Act	Not having coach present People interrupting my music. Response: Integrate & Act

Weekly Goal Log

Weekly Goals: Actions	Current Level	Goal Level	M	T	W	Th	F	Notes
1. <u>Visualize</u> : hand first attack retreat first parry	0 days	5 days						
2. <u>Reaction train</u> : Yorube hat retreat when they attack	0 days	2 days						
3. <u>Practice Bar</u> : Verbal cue "fingers" "retreat / back"	0%	80%						

Week 8/14 Goal:

"You see, you go."

"Don't think!"
- coach

→ Train reaction, not analysis

→ Next week concentration
→ focal points

* Resume body scans
relaxation nightly

Weekly Confidence Log
 (Note successful counterarguments and daily affirmations)

Monday	I am a good fencer
	I am fearless
Tuesday	
Wednesday	I already won all of my bouts
	(starting to lose) I've already won this
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Weekly Imagery Log

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Type (Internal or External)	Int	Int					
Vividness (Rate 1-10)	3	4					
Control (Rate 1-10)	6	7					
Uses (See Below)	4	4					
Time spent	3 mins	5 mins					

Uses Chart:

- 1 - Prepractice Readiness/Focus
- 2 - Precompetition Readiness/Focus
- 3 - Goal Programming/Goal CD
- 4 - Practicing Skills or Plays

- 5 - Practicing a Specific Strategy
- 6 - Error Correction
- 7 - Site Familiarity

Realized when I do visualizations
my view is from an outside perspective of the
scene with me in it.

Trying to switch to internal view

Appendix D: August 11-17

Weekly Goal Log

Date: 8/11

Weekly Goal:

Stay focused without judgement on
opponents

Three Actions I'm Going to Take:

1. Grading when looking into wife
counting & describing

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
X		X		X	

2. Use start of bar imagery for anxiety reduction
*make script

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
Script →			X		

3. Ask to start on King strip for Koth

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
					not played this week
					*Team event

Master Weekly Performance Tracker

Dates: 8/11 - 8/17

Tournament Week?: Yes

No

Practice 1 (Day: Mon.)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	<u>Neutral</u>	Ready to go	<u>Distracted</u>	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	----------------	-------------	-------------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Fencing relaxed
catching judgements

What didn't work well today?

Frustrated in lesson at myself

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

<u>Counting</u> as a refocus	low tolerance of lesson mistakes
------------------------------	----------------------------------

switch? lesson vs. bout

Practice 2 (Day: Wed.)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	<u>Neutral</u>	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	<u>Clear</u>	Excited
-------	----------------	-------------	------------	---------	--------------	---------

What worked well today?

Observing opponents
recognizing anxiety

What didn't work well today?

lesson - found technical skills difficult

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

Opp. hand & grip I've won this	Why am I not doing this right Why does everyone else keep getting better and I'm worse.
-----------------------------------	--

Guilt about not training more
- watching videos
- weight lifting

Practice 3 (Day: Fri) **easy class*

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	<u>Ready to go</u>	Distracted	Anxious	<u>Clear</u>	Excited
-------	---------	--------------------	------------	---------	--------------	---------

What worked well today?

Having fun. Focusing on one thing at a time

What didn't work well today?

n/a (low key class)

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

<i>This is the most dedicated group & focus</i>	<i>n/a</i>
---	------------

Practice 4 (Day: _____)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

--	--

New mental or technical skills attempted:

Mindfulness → counting

Imagery → imagine beach walk

Reflections: → image first part of boat

• note for the day

Psych: describe clothing, counting, names

Felt good to choose to go Friday instead of going out to dinner

APPENDIX B

Imagery Script Checklist

Imagery Script Checklist	
Who	
Gender:	Male ☐ Female ☒
Age:	35
Sport:	Fencing
Competitive level:	National
Sport characteristics:	Combat, anaerobic, precision
Imagery experience:	Imagery use:  Imagery ability:  1PP ☐ 3PP ☒ Combination ☒
Other details/characteristic to consider: High-task, high ego avoidant (motivation) High anxiety, low confidence	
Where and When	
Where:	Training ☐ Competition ☒ Away from training/performance ☒
When:	Before ☒ / During ☒ After ☒
Frequency:	4-5 x / week
Other details to consider: troubleshooting technical issues focus intentionality	
Why (e.g., learn/improve skills/strategies, increase confidence, control arousal/anxiety, etc.) Improve skills; attentional awareness Confront/dissipate anxiety → increase confidence	
What (Content tailored to the "Who," "Where and When," and "Why") Parry; hand first change line attack anxiety simulation	
Important sensory modalities:	Visual ☒ Kinesthetic ☒ Auditory ☐ Olfactory ☐ other.....
Personalized details:	mindfulness combined

Bout Imagery Script

Take a deep breath in... and let it go.

You have finished your warm up bouts and are feeling confident and ready to start pools. The scent of your glove is familiar and comforting. You start hooking up into the reel. First the clip, then the plug, then your weapon. You are not rushing. You are preparing.

Breathe in feeling nervous, which means you are excited. Breathe out letting your thoughts dissipate.

You step onto the piste. The strip is open and waiting for you. The referee tests your weapon and you observe your opponent's dominant hand and grip. The referee asks you to test blades and you give a small smile to your opponent knowing you are about to take control. Your blade is in your hand. It is light, but strong. You hold it with purpose. This weapon is an extension of you.

You hear the referee's voice.

"En garde."

You walk to your en garde line. You are confident.

"Ready?"

You bend your knees. Your feet feel grounded. You are balanced, poised—not tense, but ready.

"Fence"

Time stretches. Everything slows, just slightly. You're not thinking—you're feeling. You sense distance, pressure, and opening. You trust your instincts. Every move you make comes from precision. Even when your opponent presses, you remain calm. Centered.

Mistakes do not rattle you. You recover like water flowing around stone—quiet, certain.

If anxiety begins to rise, you feel it like a ripple in the chest... but you ride it. You remember: nerves mean you care. That's all. They do not control your body. You do.

You see the target. You find the moment. Your blade stretches—clean, elegant, fast.

Touché.

You step back. Reset. Ready for the next point. Calm. Present.

You start moving into distance. Ready. Your opponent makes a successful attack. You note what you will do next time quickly and take a breath to reset. You are in control of this bout.

You step back. Reset. Ready for the next point. Calm. Present.

You start moving into distance again. Ready for their attack. This time, you know what happening and make a smooth parry and riposte. Touche.

I have already
won every bout.

(8/11)

• Opponent hand and
grip

• mindful awareness
during bouts

(8/15)
Just do it.
Talking to.

Counting

(8/13)

Describe opp.

Does people please stop
me from winning?

slow, smooth steps

music → psyth up? Queen?

Appendix E: August 18-24

Weekly Goal Log

Date: 8/18-23

Weekly Goal:

Focus on "step into distance"

Three Actions I'm Going to Take:

1. Balance on both feet (centered)

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes

2. Say "ready" everytime I step in

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes

3. Mindfulness during box / ~~only~~ ~~only~~ react on go

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes

Master Weekly Performance Tracker

Dates: 8/18-23

Tournament Week?: Yes No

Practice 1 (Day: Mon)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	<u>Ready to go</u>	Distracted	Anxious	<u>Clear</u>	Excited
-------	---------	--------------------	------------	---------	--------------	---------

What worked well today?

Watching distance & step in!

What didn't work well today?

Learned ~~to~~ ^{what} today's performance predicts about
tournaments this weekend

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

--	--

Practice 2 (Day: Tues) Open banking @ TMFC

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	<u>Neutral</u>	Ready to go	Distracted	<u>Anxious</u>	Clear	Excited
-------	----------------	-------------	------------	----------------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Came back & beat Colo after losing
Stopped assumptions about what opp. was thinking

What didn't work well today?

Cared about what Abdullah was thinking

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

<u>Accept feeling anxious neutral brain Will never be to that student again</u>	<u>Hope you're happy with me losing to your students</u>
---	--

Practice 3 (Day: Wed)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

Staying in control of distance

What didn't work well today?

more patience

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

blank mind	
------------	--

Practice 4 (Day: _____)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

What worked well today?

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

--	--

New mental or technical skills attempted:

Reflections:

Neil Lazer: Div 2

Tournament Goal Sheet

Date: 8/22

Performance Goal: Winning pool record; win one OE

Process Goal: Centered step into distance w/purpose

Actions to achieve these goals:

1. Notice both feet on the ground x
2. Notice & ease physical tension ✓
3. Trust my instincts ~

Performance Results

Pools

Wins	Losses	Indicator	Notes
3	2	43	Frustrated after "easy" loss Less patient in last 2

Direct Elimination

Wins	Losses	Score	Notes
0	1	14:15	Left handed slow; strong 6 Ⓢ hard time "figuring out"

Final Result: 34/55

One word:
Happy

Reflection

Physical State:

Ready to go, loose

Mental State:

Time for mindset, practice
very nervous for OE

Environmental State:

Coach for 1st two pool boxes; friend in pool; friendly

Add: ~~Performance~~
Satisfaction

Performance
0 1 2 3 4

Process
0 1 2 3 4

Nat Lazar : Div 1A

Tournament Goal Sheet

Date: 8/23

Performance Goal: 2 pool wins ; win on DE (*reach goal)

Process Goal: Control the step into distance

Actions to achieve these goals:

1. " Feet x
2. " Ease ✓
3. " Trust ~

Performance Results

Pools

Wins	Losses	Indicator	Notes
2	4	-10	very good 1st 2 boxes, patient ; frustrated on 3rd box knew she was coming

angry
self-talk ✓

Direct Elimination

Wins	Losses	Score	Notes
0	1	13:15	less nervous ; came back from 6 point deficit ; didn't give up

Final Result:

Reflection

Physical State:

more somatic nerves
- beach videos ; breathing

Mental State:

anxious ; then angry (about non-forcing event)
- use anger to fuel performance

Environmental State:

less friend around immediately ; new friend
~~other~~ Sandra verbal support

One word:
Ready for more

Satisfaction: Performance 0 1 2 3 4
Process 0 1 2 3 4

Appendix F: August 25-31

Weekly Goal Log

Date: 8/25

Weekly Goal:

Reset from competition

Work on imagery

Three Actions I'm Going to Take:

1. Evaluate videos

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
	X				

2. Watch back video / Recreate image

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
	X			X	

3. Re-evaluate training plan

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
X	X			X	Go to Rogue 1x / month Tues/Thurs weightlift

Imagery during lesson of skills

(Wed.)

Master Weekly Performance Tracker

Dates: 8/22-9/1

Tournament Week?: Yes

No

Practice 1 (Day: Mon)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

<u>Tired</u>	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	<u>Clear</u>	Excited
--------------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	--------------	---------

What worked well today?

Chose to be w/ family and rest instead
of fencing class

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

Practice 2 (Day: Wed.)

Physical Energy level:

General mental state:

Tired	Neutral	<u>Ready to go</u>	Distracted	Anxious	<u>Clear</u>	Excited
-------	---------	--------------------	------------	---------	--------------	---------

What worked well today?

imagery during lesson

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

Over analyzing

Practice 3 (Day: Fri)

Physical Energy level:

Tired	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

General mental state:

What worked well today?

Being creative

Listening to Donaven

What didn't work well today?

maintaining a lead

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

	low confidence "I'm not good at ..."
--	---

Practice 4 (Day: _____)

Physical Energy level:

Tired	Neutral	Ready to go	Distracted	Anxious	Clear	Excited
-------	---------	-------------	------------	---------	-------	---------

General mental state:

What worked well today?

What didn't work well today?

Effective self-talk:

Unproductive self-talk:

--	--

New mental or technical skills attempted:

Reflections:

TEST OF PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES ©

Name of University _____ Age 35 Gender M ☒ F
Sport Fencing Event(s)/ Position Epee
Years participating in sport 3.5 Today's Date 8/26

Current performance level (circle one):

International ☒ National Collegiate Regional
Junior National Club Recreational Other _____

This questionnaire measures performance strategies used by athletes in various sport situations. Because individual athletes are very different in their approach to their sport, we expect the responses to be different. We want to stress, therefore, that there are no right or wrong answers. All that is required is for you to be open and honest in your responses.

Throughout the questionnaire, several terms are used which may have different meanings for different individuals. Because of this, these terms are defined below with specific examples to sport where appropriate. Please keep these definitions in mind when responding to items with these terms.

COMPETITION: a tournament/meet where individuals or teams perform against each other.

SKILL: a specific element of your sport performance. For example, free throw shooting in basketball or a jump in figure skating.

PERFORMANCE: your execution of specific sport skills during training and competition.

ROUTINE: a set of behaviors that is performed regularly in preparation for your performance in sport. An example may be going through specific stretches while listening to a song on your walkman prior to every performance.

WORKOUT: a structured practice session to work on various elements of your sport.

VISUALIZATION/IMAGERY/REHEARSAL: these terms refer to the act of picturing in your mind some aspect of your performance. An example would be seeing and feeling yourself execute a specific skill perfectly.

TOPS 2

Each of the following items describes a specific situation that you may encounter in your training and competition. Please rate how frequently these situations apply to you on the following scale:

1 = Never
2 = Rarely
3 = Sometimes
4 = Often
5 = Always

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

Please put a circle around your answer

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I set realistic but challenging goals for practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I say things to myself to help my practice performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. During practice I visualize successful past performances. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. My attention wanders while I am training. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I practice using relaxation techniques at workouts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I practice a way to relax. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. During competition I set specific result goals for myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. When the pressure is on at competitions, I know how to relax. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. My self-talk during competition is negative. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. During practice, I don't think about performing much - I just let it happen. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I perform at competitions without consciously thinking about it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I rehearse my performance in my mind before practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I can raise my energy level at competitions when necessary. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. During competition I have thoughts of failure. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. I use practice time to work on my relaxation technique. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I manage my self-talk effectively during practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. I am able to relax if I get too nervous at a competition. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. I visualize my competition going exactly the way I want it to go. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I am able to control distracting thoughts when I am training. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. I get frustrated and emotionally upset when practice does not go well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. I have specific cue words or phrases that I say to myself to help my performance during competition. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
22.	I evaluate whether I achieve my competition goals.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	During practice, my movements and skills just seem to flow naturally from one to another.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	When I make a mistake in competition, I have trouble getting my concentration back on track.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	When I need to, I can relax myself at competitions to get ready to perform.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I set very specific goals for competition.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I relax myself at practice to get ready.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I psych myself up at competitions to get ready to perform.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	At practice, I can allow the whole skill or movement to happen naturally without concentrating on each part of the skill.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	During competition I perform on 'automatic pilot'.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	When something upsets me during a competition, my performance suffers.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	I keep my thoughts positive during competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	I say things to myself to help my competitive performance.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	At competitions, I rehearse the feel of my performance in my imagination.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	I practice a way to energize myself.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	I manage my self-talk effectively during competition.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	I set goals to help me use practice time effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	I have trouble energizing myself if I feel sluggish during practice.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	When things are going poorly in practice, I stay in control of myself emotionally.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	I do what needs to be done to get psyched up for competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	During competition, I don't think about performing much - I just let it happen.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	At practice, when I visualize my performance, I imagine what it will feel like.	1	2	3	4	5

TOPS 4

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
43. I find it difficult to relax when I am too tense at competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I have difficulty increasing my energy level during workouts.	1	2	3	4	5
45. During practice I focus my attention effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
46. I set personal performance goals for a competition.	1	2	3	4	5
47. I motivate myself to train through positive self-talk.	1	2	3	4	5
48. During practice sessions I just seem to be in a flow.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I practice energizing myself during training sessions.	1	2	3	4	5
50. I have trouble maintaining my concentration during long practices.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I talk positively to myself to get the most out of practice.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I can increase my energy to just the right level for competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
53. I have very specific goals for practice.	1	2	3	4	5
54. During competition, I play/perform instinctively with little conscious effort.	1	2	3	4	5
55. I imagine my competitive routine before I do it at a competition.	1	2	3	4	5
56. I imagine screwing up during a competition.	1	2	3	4	5
57. I talk positively to myself to get the most out of competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
58. I don't set goals for practices, I just go out and do it.	1	2	3	4	5
59. I rehearse my performance in my mind at competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
60. I have trouble controlling my emotions when things are not going well at practice.	1	2	3	4	5
61. When I perform poorly in practice I lose my focus.	1	2	3	4	5
62. My emotions keep me from performing my best at competitions.	1	2	3	4	5
63. My emotions get out of control under the pressure of competition.	1	2	3	4	5
64. At practice, when I visualize my performance, I imagine watching myself as if on a video replay.	1	2	3	4	5

How to Score the TEST OF PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES (TOPS)

Place the score for the item number on the appropriate line;

For example: if the response to item #6 is "2", place that response in the chart below like this:

e.g.: 6 2

Do this for all 64 items, filling the 16 columns of blank spaces with numbers. Add each of the scales separately. The number represents the frequency of use of the mental skills labeled at the top of the column.

Items with an asterisk "*" are reverse-scored (so, higher subscale scores indicate more frequent use)

"PRACTICE" ITEMS

Goal Setting	Emotional Control	Automaticity	Relaxation	Self-Talk	Imagery	Attention Control	Activation
1 <u>5</u>	20* <u>4</u>	10 <u>3</u>	5 <u>3</u>	2 <u>4</u>	3 <u>1</u>	4* <u>4</u>	35 <u>2</u>
37 <u>4</u>	39 <u>4</u>	23 <u>2</u>	6 <u>3</u>	16 <u>4</u>	12 <u>1</u>	19 <u>4</u>	38* <u>4</u>
53 <u>5</u>	60* <u>5</u>	29 <u>4</u>	15 <u>2</u>	47 <u>4</u>	42 <u>2</u>	45 <u>5</u>	44* <u>3</u>
58* <u>4</u>	61* <u>3</u>	48 <u>3</u>	27 <u>2</u>	51 <u>4</u>	64 <u>3</u>	50* <u>4</u>	49 <u>3</u>
+ <u>18</u>	+ <u>16</u>	+ <u>12</u>	+ <u>4</u>	+ <u>16</u>	+ <u>7</u>	+ <u>17</u>	+ <u>11</u>

"COMPETITION" ITEMS

Goal Setting	Emotional Control	Automaticity	Relaxation	Self-Talk	Imagery	Positive Thinking	Activation
7 <u>5</u>	24* <u>4</u>	11 <u>3</u>	8 <u>3</u>	21 <u>4</u>	18 <u>2</u>	9* <u>3</u>	13 <u>3</u>
22 <u>5</u>	31* <u>3</u>	30 <u>3</u>	17 <u>2</u>	33 <u>5</u>	34 <u>2</u>	14* <u>2</u>	28 <u>4</u>
26 <u>5</u>	62* <u>4</u>	41 <u>3</u>	25 <u>3</u>	36 <u>4</u>	55 <u>3</u>	32 <u>4</u>	40 <u>5</u>
46 <u>5</u>	63* <u>4</u>	54 <u>3</u>	43* <u>3</u>	57 <u>4</u>	59 <u>3</u>	56* <u>5</u>	52 <u>3</u>
+ <u>20</u>	+ <u>15</u>	+ <u>11</u>	+ <u>11</u>	+ <u>17</u>	+ <u>10</u>	+ <u>14</u>	+ <u>15</u>

Flow
Follow
Grading
Order

Survey of Athletic Experiences

A number of statements that athletes have used to describe their experiences are given below. Please read each statement carefully and then recall as accurately as possible how often you experience the same thing. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement.

- 1) On a daily or weekly basis, I set very specific goals for myself that guide what I do.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 2) I get the most out of my talent and skills.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 3) When the coach or manager tells me how to correct a mistake I've made, I tend to take it personally and feel upset.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 4) When I am playing sports, I can focus my attention and block out distractions.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 5) I remain positive and enthusiastic during competition, no matter how badly things are going.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 6) I tend to play better under pressure because I think more clearly.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 7) I worry quite a bit about what others think about my performance.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 8) I tend to do a lot of planning about how to reach my goal.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 9) I feel confident that I will play well.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 10) When a coach or manager criticizes me, I become upset rather than helped.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 11) It is easy for me to keep distracting thoughts from interfering with something I am watching or listening to.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 12) I put a lot of pressure on myself by worrying how I will perform.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 13) I set my own performance goals for each practice.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.

- 14) I don't have to be pushed to practice or play hard; I give 100%.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 15) If a coach criticizes or yells at me, I correct the mistake without getting upset about it.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 16) I handle unexpected situations in my sport very well.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 17) When things are going badly, I tell myself to keep calm, and this works for me.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 18) The more pressure there is during a game, the more I enjoy it,
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 19) While competing, I worry about making mistakes or failing to come through.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 20) I have my own game plan worked out in my head long before the game begins.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 21) When I feel myself getting too tense, I can quickly relax my body and calm myself.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 22) To me, pressure situations are challenges that I welcome.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 23) I think about and imagine what will happen if I fail or screw up.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 24) I maintain emotional control no matter how things are going for me.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 25) It is easy for me to direct my attention and focus on a single object or person.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 26) When I fail to reach my goals, it makes me try even harder.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 27) I improve my skills by listening carefully to advice and instruction from my coaches.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.
- 28) I make fewer mistakes when the pressure's on because I concentrate better.
0 = almost never 1 = sometimes 2 = often 3 = almost always.

How to Score the Results:

For each item on the profile sheet, you will see a number underneath the phrase you circled:

For example: Item 6: often = 2, Place that number in the chart below the item number,

e.g.: 6 _ 2 _

Do this for all 28 items, filling the seven columns of blank spaces with numbers. Add each of the seven separately. The number represents the strengths and weaknesses in the mental skills labeled at the top of the column.

If there's a * Score items in reverse order.

Coping with Adversity	Peaking Under Pressure	Goal Setting	Concentration	Freedom From Worry	Confidence and Achievement Motivation	Coachability
5 <u>3</u>	6 <u>2</u>	1 <u>2</u>	4 <u>3</u>	*7 <u>0</u>	2 <u>3</u>	*3 <u>3</u>
17 <u>2</u>	18 <u>1</u>	8 <u>3</u>	11 <u>2</u>	*12 <u>1</u>	9 <u>1</u>	*10 <u>2</u>
21 <u>2</u>	22 <u>2</u>	13 <u>3</u>	16 <u>3</u>	*19 <u>1</u>	14 <u>3</u>	15 <u>3</u>
24 <u>3</u>	28 <u>2</u>	20 <u>2</u>	25 <u>3</u>	*23 <u>3</u>	26 <u>3</u>	27 <u>3</u>
+ <u>10</u>	+ <u>7</u>	+ <u>10</u>	+ <u>11</u>	+ <u>5</u>	+ <u>10</u>	+ <u>11</u>

Cognitive appraisal

Relaxation
Mindfulness

Self-judgements

? Imagery

Self-talk

