
MENTAL TRAINING FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE: TIPS FOR RUNNING A MARATHON

1. Watch your self-talk

- a. Be your own biggest fan-mentally cheer yourself on rather than heckle yourself.
- b. Choose to listen to the “good” voice in your head and mute the negative one; don’t give the doubts any energy
- c. Change negatives to positives (pain=working hard)
- d. Focus on what you control (how you’re running, not the situation)
- e. Focus on reward rather than risk (“it’ll feel great to finish!”, not “what if I don’t..”)
- f. Focus on what you want to do rather than what you’re avoiding (stride vs avoiding pain)

2. Focus tricks to help you succeed

- a. *Experienced runners*: Listen to your body
- b. *Novice runners*: Get out of your head/distract yourself
 - Stay in the present (don’t worry about how much you still have left)
 - Sing a song
 - Count your steps
- c. Race (pass someone in blue, then someone else)
- d. Create a mental map for the course
 - Use landmarks to trigger a mental reaction (toilet=flush away the pain)
 - Break the race down and choose your focus/attitude for each piece

3. Use in-race imagery

- a. Sunshine (or rain) pulling away the pain
- b. Channel your inner Rocky
- c. Imagine being the pacer and everyone following you
- d. See yourself crossing the line

4. Other Tips

- a. Have a terrible towel (or something to get the crowd cheering)
- b. Run with the craziest person you see (create fun!)
- c. Find the “least likely to succeed” and keep the image of them finishing in your head (“if he can do it...”)
- d. Talk to people about what the start is like
- e. “Plant” friends and family
- f. Water stations=triggers to release pain/negativity
- g. If you don’t control it, let it go!