

Now Body Wellness: Overcoming Mind Blocks Worksheet

Step 1: Notice your thoughts and examine them.

What are some of the automatic thoughts that come up when you're facing a mind block? What does your internal dialogue sound like?

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Are these facts or feelings? Are they cognitive distortions (irrational thought patterns that can be either negative or positive and perpetuate the effects of psychological states)?

Step 2: What is the outcome of my negative mindset and mind blocks?

- Popping/Circling (figure skating)
- The twisties (gymnastics)
- Negative self-talk
- Avoidance of practice/meets/competition
- Overly emotional or easily frustrated
- You practice better than you perform
- Playing timid and scared to make mistakes
- Inconsistency in performance
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

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Step 3: What is the cause of my negative mindset and mind blocks?

Check or highlight the following causes that feel true to you.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lack of confidence<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ In physical ability○ Self-doubt○ Too much “noise” or stuff going on in the brain○ Lack of focus○ Linear Thinking<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ All-or-Nothing thinking○ Absolutist thinking○ Catastrophic thinking○ Pessimistic thinking○ Being watched by coaches, peers, or parents○ Not enough room (physically)○ Self-sabotage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Burned out○ Negative self-talk○ Fear of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Injury or Reinjury○ The element itself○ Embarrassment○ Attention○ Hitting someone/something○ Falling○ Other: |
|---|--|

Step 4: What is the cause of my negative mindset and mind blocks?

Take a look at the statements you wrote and the reasons you find yourself stuck. Ask yourself the following question: *What do I need to address in order for me fully commit to the element/tumbling pass/etc.?* Take a look at the list of interventions (on the next page) and brainstorm the ways to apply the interventions to practice and competition.

1.

2.

3.

Intervention and Application

Select the following intervention(s) you'd like to use to overcome your mind block.

- **Focus on the take off and cues:**
 - Sound technique during the take-off often results in salvageable elements.
 - Practice your drills with intent – muscle memory!
- **Give yourself permission to make a mistake:**
 - Figure Skaters - You will pop and circle again, and that's okay. The goal is to reduce the number of times you pop or circle.
 - Gymnasts – You will get lost in the air again, and that's okay. The goal is to reduce the number of times you get lost and lose your bearings on your skills.
 - Shifting your thinking process takes time and practice. It's important to cultivate self-compassion because every one of us will make mistakes. It's with self-awareness that athletes will be able to recognize their false beliefs and replace them with accurate, realistic statements.
- **Addressing Internal Dialogue:**
 - Bring awareness to internal dialogue
 - Cognitive restructuring
 - Rational thinking
 - Cognitive reappraisal
 - Dismantling cognitive distortions such as:
 - All-or-nothing thinking
 - Absolutist thinking
 - Catastrophic thinking
 - Pessimistic thinking
- **Visualization:** Do at home in private when you are feeling confident (i.e., after a good training day) and/or calm. Why? Visualization stimulates the same regions in the brain that an athlete uses to execute your objective. This internal imagery practice helps the athletes reduce performance anxiety and mentally prepare for doing it on the ice/floor (Newmark, 2012; Cummings & Ste-Marie, 2001).
 - **Option 1:** Visualize being in your body on the ice/floor. Play your music and go through your routine.
 - **Option 2:** Visualize yourself sitting in the bleachers or side of the rink/floor. Watch yourself do your routine with your jumps in it.
- **Diaphragmatic Breathing:** This kind of breath can help activate the parasympathetic nervous system, slow your heartrate, improve circulation, and ground you to the present moment (Hunt, Rushton, Shenberger & Murayama, 2018).
 - Breathe in slowly through your nose. Notice your stomach moving out against your hand. Try to keep the hand on your upper chest still. Next, tighten your

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stomach as you exhale through your mouth. Notice your stomach move down as you exhale, keeping the hand on your upper chest still.

- Here is a helpful resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xStSEsEFso4>.
- **Journaling:** Journaling is a very powerful tool built upon simple principles of self-monitoring and reflection that can help make change in the moment, motivate the athlete, and help an athlete find the direction they want to take the rest of the session (Hensley & Munn, 2020).
 - This is an alternative to being distracted, self-destructing, and taking hard falls. Journaling for 1-3 minutes to get your thoughts out and recenter is much better use of your training time dedicated to taking hard, dangerous falls.

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