

Competition Mental Toughness

Set Goals

- Be thorough and precise
- Develop a team mission (*Team Mission form attached*)
- Develop individual goals that relate to team mission. (*Goals I Wish to Obtain form attached*)
- Videotape routine and individuals in order to learn, critique and reinforce

Focus on the positive. Teach cheerleaders to....

- Narrow their focus to what they can do (*Emotional Talent Checklist - attached*)
- Make their emotions work for them (*Mental Self-Talk form - attached*)
- Reinforce their abilities at every practice both mentally and physically

Know your what you need to do

- Go to a competition just to watch
- Watch videotapes of local and national teams
 - Evaluate the teams to determine the traits of a good and bad team

Develop ways to relax

Practice relaxation techniques.

- Deep breathing: Find a quiet place to sit down. Inhale slowly through your nose, drawing air deep into your lungs. Hold your breath for about 5 seconds, then release it slowly. Repeat the exercise five times. *
- Muscle relaxation: Contract (flex) a group of muscles tightly. Keep them tensed for about 5 seconds, then release. Repeat the exercise five times, selecting different muscle groups.*

Develop a rituals

- Develop a pre-event ritual both as a team and as an individual
- Develop a relaxation ritual
- Develop a ritual to “let go” of mistakes and frustrations
- Develop a “Start” and “End” of practice tradition

Competition Fuel - Think fuel not taste

- Hydration – lots of water
- Carbs & fats provide immediate energy: fresh fruit, bagel & cream cheese, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, nut mixes
- Stay away from processed foods, nutritional bars and energy drinks

Mental Training – Competitive mindset (*Transformers – attached*)

"Mental training anticipates the mental challenges of actual competition—what we call the ‘mental moments,’" Craig Wrisberg, Professor Sports Psychology, University of Tennessee, says. "It helps the athlete develop and rehearse proper responses to those moments."

- During practice, teach them how to “release or forget” about a stunt that fell or a forgotten move. Instead focus on next skill.

- Doubt & fear are a reality. Teach your cheerleaders
 - Not to run away from it.
 - Learn how to recognize it and deal with it. Take a deep breathe.
 - Use verbal cues/phrases that help them get through the tough part. Repeat to themselves, “ It is ok, I learn from mistakes”
 - Reinforcing statements. Program your mind to maintain composure and look doubt square in the face and conquer it. “I am in control of my feelings and I can do this stunt”.
 - They need to see themselves winning - Make their emotions work for them.
 - Visualize themselves doing the routine perfectly
 - Visualize proper technique
 - Playing in the present

Reinforcing Coach

- Repeat often to your cheerleaders what they do right. Accentuate the positive. As said by Bruce Brown “ *The power of messages often comes in a few well-chosen words. Words initiate thoughts. Thoughts provide motivation. Motivation produces action. A few words can speak volumes. Words coming from the right person at the right moment, can go directly to the heart*”.
- Structure your practices to set them up for early successes to build confidence.
- Teach your athletes Pintino’s phrases of “ Success is a choice” and “ Victory is deserved”. “ All the sweat, aches, pains, and exhaustion is not a sacrifice – instead it is an investment in their victory. Each time they go that extra mile they are gaining an advantage over their rival,” according to Jeff Janssen in The Seven Secrets to Successful Coaches.
- Use motivational quotes and challenges to inspire your cheerleaders.
- Document successes
 - Bulletin board
 - Charts
 - Photos
 - PR
- At competitions, project an image of confidence to your cheerleaders. If you look nervous, your athletes will feel it and become nervous, too.
- Stay upbeat in practice, at games, during warm-ups, in victory and defeat.
- Tell them that they do well under pressure. (**Reinforcing statements**)
- Be prepared when you take your team to a competition.
 - Arrive in plenty of time
 - Know the rules
 - Understand the score sheet
 - Know the layout and how the competition will run

Be the role model of confidence that you want your cheerleaders to be!

* Kidshealth.org

Oak Harbor High School Cheerleaders

Mission

1. Challenge ourselves and each other to work through our struggles
2. Work together for the betterment of the team
3. Work toward a common goal ...Win Nationals
4. Show respect & appreciation to teammates and coaches at all times
5. Strive to be better than the rest
6. Always stay positive and supportive
7. Work hard and remember to have fun!

GOALS I WISH TO OBTAIN

What do you dream about, wish for?

Choose the dreams you want to pursue and achieve in cheerleading by

1. Making change a priority
2. Being willing to take risks. Be willing to do something new and let go of worrying about looking bad or feeling stupid.
3. Making a personal commitment
4. Taking action

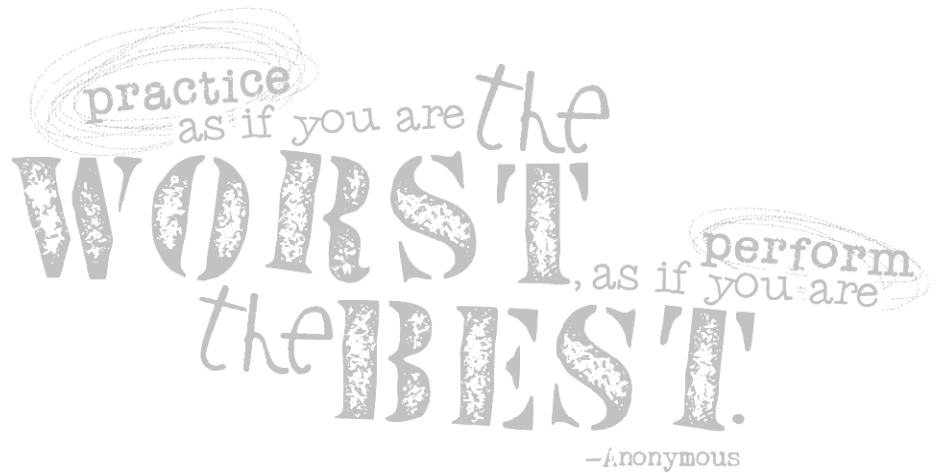
30-day goal:

Definition:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:



3-month goal:

Definition:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

6-month goal:

Definition:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:



EMOTIONAL TALENT CHECKLIST

- Circle the number that applies to you (1 is low; 5 is high).
- Determine one action to address weakest area.
- Discuss with a friend, parent, coach, and determine an action plan

1. **Drive** (overwhelming desire to succeed) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
2. **Passion** (loves cheer; can't stay away from it) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
3. **Stability** (can handle stress, resilient) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
4. **Toughness** (have good self esteem; confident) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
5. **Positive Attitude** (enjoys challenges, avoids negative thinking) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
6. **Realism** (works on limitations; learns from experience) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
7. **Focus** (blocks out distractions) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
8. **Effort** (first on and off the performing surface) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
9. **Persistence** (can manage desire to be perfect) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
10. **Competitiveness** (refuse to lose, likes to compete) 1 2 3 4 5
Action plan:
- more powerful than the will to win is the COURAGE to begin.*
-anonymous
- practice as if you are the WORST, as if you are perform the BEST.*
-anonymous

MENTAL SELF-TALK

An affirmation is a positive self-statement that supports your goal. It must always be in the present tense, positive and personal.

What I say to myself before I start to learn a new skill

Positive

Negative

What I say to myself when I am learning a new skill

Positive

Negative

What I say to myself when I have a hard time learning the new skill

Positive

Negative

What I say to myself after I learn the new skill

Positive

Negative

TRANSFORMERS

An affirmation is a positive statement that supports what you want to be true. They are always positive, used in the present tense and personal. By using positive self-statements, you are working on changing your personal belief systems, your destructive self-concepts.

Can becomes Am.

Will becomes Do.

The harder it is to form a positive statement from one of your negative beliefs, the better it will be for you, and the more important it is to change it to a positive self-statement.

EXAMPLES:

I believe in my own ability.

I have a positive mental attitude and self-image.

I believe in myself.

I am strong and powerful.

I am in control and focused.

The more I believe in myself, the better I will perform.

I am prepared and relaxed. I love to compete and push myself, reaching my goals.

I enjoy performing in front of a crowd and appreciate their support.

I am capable and competent cheerleader.

I am good enough.

It is ok to make mistakes. I learn from them and I am stronger.

ATTITUDE
is everything