

Guided Imagery for Athletes

Whether your team is prepping for a big game or bouncing back from a tough loss, use this guided imagery exercise to get in the state of mind you need.

Invite everyone to get into a comfortable position. Make sure you've determined the desired outcome before beginning – this could be to focus, the win, to reset, to be resilient, etc.

1. Settle into the space. Feel the weight of your body supported by the ground/chair/floor. Take a few deep breathes – in through the nose and out through the mouth. Gently close your eyes.
2. Notice the sensations of the space. Is there a smell you notice? What are the sounds around you? What is the temperature of the air? Just take in the sensations – you don't have to react or response, just notice.
3. Gently shift your attention to your breathing. Relax into your normal pattern of breath. Feel your belly and chest rise and fall with each breath.
4. Invite the group to visualize the outcome you pre-determined. This visualization should be detailed and as realistic as possible.
Use all five senses when visualize the outcome. What would you feel? What would you see? What would you hear? Who would be there? What would it smell like? What would it taste like? What would the temperature be? What textures would you feel?
Be as detailed as you can.
5. Once you have settled into the visualization, refocus your attention on your breath.
6. Revisit the sensations of the space you are in – what are the sounds, smells, temperature, etc.?
7. Feel the weight of your body in space and the ground supporting your body.
8. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.

Revisit this exercise and the visualized place as often as possible before or after a practice or game.