# Coaching Para-Sport Athletes



Mental skills that coaches can incorporate with their athletes.

### Impairment Type + Adaptation

- **Physical**: Match the image to how the athlete performs the sport.
- Visual: Most athletes with visual impairments are able to create visual images using their other senses.
- Intellectual: Combine imagery with physical practice.

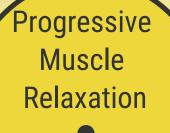
#### Impairment Type + Adaptation

Imagery

Physical: Provide longer time to complete precompetition and pre-performance routines. Account extra time for:

- Transportation
- Accessibility issues
- Equipment organization





#### Impairment Type + Adaptation

Physical (Amputee): This can include the whole body or just sections. Let the athlete choose their relaxation script.

Physical (Cerebral Palsy): Only do the relaxation phase. Other relaxation techniques that may be used instead include deep breathing and imagery.

Visual: Prior to progressive muscle relaxation, the athlete can listen to relaxing music, have a poem read to them, or another

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### Impairment Type + Adaptation

**All:** Involvement and supporting independence are crucial for the athletes.

**Intellectual:** Provide structure and routine, this will help the athletes be comfortable and thriving.

Communicatior

Impairment Type + Adaptation

**Physical (e.g. spinal lesion):** Adjust yourself to the athlete's level (i.e. sitting or crouching).

**Physical (e.g. cerebral palsy):** Keep eye contact with the athlete and be patient.

**Visual:** Determine what methods of communication work best for the athlete

**Intellectual:** Have the athlete physically demonstrate understanding and repeat instructions back to you, avoid yes and no questions.

Other tips:

- Allow extra time for instructions (repetition, reinforcement)
- Use drawings rather than literacy (e.g. goals)
- Audio record imagery scripts so athletes can use play back

## To Learn More Visit: Sport Psychology for Coaches It's FREE!



Source: https://sportpsychologyforcoaches.ca/diversity/para-sport/