

Cognitive Restructuring

The Situation

What situation is causing the pre-performance anxiety?

"The championship game is tomorrow and last time we played this team we lost."

The Feeling

What feelings occurred as a result of the pre-performance anxiety?

"I'm nervous and stressed. I just want the game to be over already!"

The Thought

What thoughts come along with the negative feelings brought on by pre-performance anxiety?

"I won't be able to stop them from scoring. When we lost last time, I was on the field for every goal they scored on us."

The Evaluation

How accurate are my thoughts about the situation?

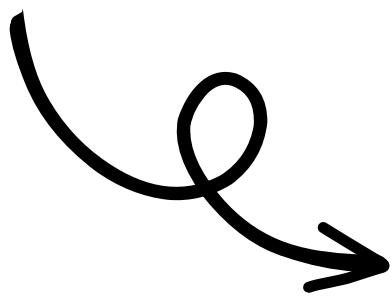
"I play lots of minutes during our games, so it's always a possibility that I'm on the field for a goal."

The Decision

Are my thoughts accurate? Is what I'm thinking logical and reasonable?

"I may be overestimating how responsible I am for the goals that get scored on us. I have improved so much from last season and really strengthened my skills. I can definitely handle this."

What is it?



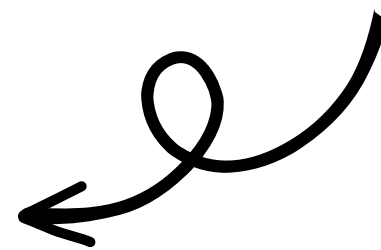
Cognitive restructuring is a strategy used to take away the power of negative thoughts and feelings brought on by pre-performance anxiety. It asks you to reflect in order to recognize, challenge, and replace negative thought patterns with more positive thoughts and perceptions of anxiety

How can it help with pre-performance anxiety?

Negative thoughts often lead to negative feelings and self-perceptions, which can increase anxiety and weaken performance. Learning to recognize the thoughts that fly through your head is a skill. By reflecting on your experience and learning to recognize these thoughts as they occur, you create an opportunity to stop them in their tracks and generate more positive alternative thoughts that may help you perform better and lessen the anxiety you feel

Is it hard to do?

This strategy can take time for you to master, as it requires focus. It can be hard to recognize and acknowledge thoughts as you have them because we usually don't stop to think about what we just thought about! Practicing this strategy in your everyday life - not just during sports - may help it become more of a natural habit.



When can it be used?

- Before a sporting event (ie. game, practice, competition, training session)
- Before an action, skill, or movement (ie. kick, shot, throw, pass, sprint)
- During an action, skill, or movement