IMAGERY

- Seeing with you mind
What is imagery?

- Create or recreate an experience in your mind.
- Produced from experiences or product of memory
- Similar to real sensory experience
- Involves all the senses
How Imagery Works

- Psychoneuromuscular Theory
  - Neuromuscular activity pattern activated during the imaginal process
  - Research with downhill skiers by Suinn monitored electric activity in leg muscles
    - Imagined the skill
    - Monitored the physical skill of skiing
  - Imagine of performance strengthens neuromuscular pattern
How Imagery Works

- Symbolic Learning Theory
  - Imagery may function as a coding system.
  - Feltz & Landers study found participants who use imagery performed consistently better on tasks that were primarily cognitive than those that were motoric.
How Imagery Works

- Psychological Skill Hypothesis
  - Imagery works through developing and refining psychological skills
  - Imagery can improve concentration, reduce anxiety, and enhance confidence
How Imagery Works

- Bioinformational Theory
  - Image is functionally organized set of propositions stored by the brain.
  - Image contains
    - Stimulus proposition
    - Response proposition
  - Imagery contains stimulus and response propositions that elicits physiological responses.
How Imagery Works

- **Triple Code Model**
  - Three essential parts of imagery
    - I (Image itself)
    - S (Somatic response)
    - M (meaning of the image)
  - *Individual differences* are seen in one or all the parts.
Factors in Effectiveness of Imagery

Nature of the task:
Imagery affects performance the most on cognitive tasks.

Skill level of the performer:
Imagery helps performance for both novice and experienced performers; effects are somewhat stronger for experienced performers.
Factors in Effectiveness of Imagery

- **Imaging ability:** Imagery is more effective when individuals are higher in their ability to image (have better vividness and control).

- **Combination with practice:** Using imagery along with physical practice.
Uses of Imagery

- Improve concentration
- Build confidence
- Control emotional responses
- Acquire and practice sport skills
Uses of Imagery

- Acquire and practice strategy
- Cope with pain and adversity
- Solve problems
Types of Imagery

**Internal imagery** Imagine the execution of a skill from your own vantage point (a first-person perspective).

**External imagery** View yourself from the perspective of an external observer (like watching yourself on video).
Key:

Whether a person uses an internal or external image appears to be less important than his or her choosing a comfortable style that produces clear, controllable images.
Keys to Effective Imagery

Vividness

Use all the senses to make images as vivid and detailed as possible.

*Exercise:* Imagine being at home, a positive performance of a skill, a best performance.
Controllability

Learn to manipulate your images so they do what you want them to.

*Exercise:*
Imagine controlling a performance, controlling your emotions, a performance against a tough opponent.
Developing an Imagery Training Program

- Tailor imagery programs to an athlete’s individual needs, abilities, and interests.
- The first step in developing an imagery program is evaluating the athlete’s imagery skills.
- Imagery must be individualized and practiced. Hence, it should be built into an athlete’s daily routine.
Developing an Imagery Training Program

**Imagery guidelines:**

- Must have motion; not a still picture
- Relax first, imagery second
- Imagine the correct performance
- Vivid and controllable images
- Effective when associated with physical practice of the performance

(continued)
Developing an Imagery Training Program

**Imagery guidelines:**

- Videotapes
- Certain sports and skill imagine the critical components
- Imagining in real time
When to Use Imagery

- Before and after practice
- Before and after competition
- During breaks in action (in practice and competition)
- During personal time
- When recovering from injury
The END