

TP TOP PERFORMANCE®

Helping You Be Your Best.

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Less Stress, More Success

Visualization, also called mental imagery or guided imagery, is a powerful tool for boosting performance.

What it is: Visualization involves mentally picturing the results you hope to achieve. Athletes often use this technique in training and before competition.

How to do it:

- 1 **Set a goal.** Think of something you want to achieve — such as run a faster mile, make a successful presentation, start a new project, have a difficult conversation or complete a tough task at work.
- 2 **See yourself.** Picture yourself performing the action and completing the goal. Use all your senses to visualize it in detail. How do you feel? What does success look like? What steps do you take?
- 3 **Practice.** Find a quiet space for a few minutes each day, close your eyes and visualize yourself achieving a goal, surmounting an obstacle or making a positive change.



What it does:

- ❖ Calms the mind so you relax and let go of stress.
- ❖ Quiets negative self-talk and puts you in a more positive mindset.
- ❖ Makes you believe you can achieve your goal.
- ❖ Improves focus, assertiveness and self-esteem.
- ❖ Enhances self-awareness and intuition, which can help you achieve more and make better decisions.

Flu and COVID-19 Vaccinations

The CDC recommends that everyone age six months and older get an annual flu vaccine. We are susceptible to many different influenza viruses every year, and they are constantly changing. U.S. flu vaccines are reviewed annually and updated as needed to match circulating viruses. Flu vaccines protect against the three or four viruses (depending on the vaccine) that research suggests will be most common. Learn more at [cdc.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu).

And if you haven't received the free COVID-19 shot, get it as soon as possible. It reduces your risk of coronavirus infection and, if you do become infected, lowers your chances of being hospitalized. Learn more at [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

And did you know? The 2020-2021 flu season was much milder due to actions, such as wearing masks, physical distancing, less travel and more people getting the flu shot during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020-2021 season has the lowest number of cases on record, according to the CDC.



Mind Your Temper

Anger is often beneficial. It can alert us that something is wrong, lead us to solutions and help us heal. But, anger that flares up frequently or burns too hot can cause problems in our personal and professional lives. A technique called **self-distancing** can keep anger from blazing out of control, according to research from Ohio State University and the University of Michigan.

To illustrate, a normal tendency when you're angry is to mentally put yourself in the middle of the situation, perhaps obsessing about how to retaliate. This can aggravate your anger and affect the people around you.

To self-distance, imagine the person or situation making you angry from far away, as if you are a fly on the wall. Become an observer, not a participant.

Other distancing techniques that can help control anger: Take a brisk walk, breathe deeply, count to ten, use humor and imagine a relaxing scene. Rather than immerse yourself in anger, find ways to step back, calm down and find answers.

Time Management Tricks



Every day holds the same number of hours. It's how you use them that counts. Avoid these time management errors:

🕒 **Getting a late start.** Rising just 30 minutes earlier can help you avoid the stress of rushing and gain time for yourself — to exercise or tackle important work before the day's distractions begin.

🕒 **Getting distracted.** Social media, news headlines, email and texting can create constant interruptions. Turn off and tune out electronic distractions to accomplish more.

🕒 **Sacrificing rest.** It's tempting to skip down time and breaks when you are busy, but a few minutes to rest and recharge will help you accomplish more in the long run.

🕒 **Underestimating time.** Spending 45 minutes on a task you scheduled five minutes for is a sure way to fall behind on other tasks. Carefully preview the steps and time needed to complete your tasks.

🕒 **Multitasking.** Working on many things at once can create the illusion of being highly productive — but it can rob you of the focus needed to finish what you start. Most efficient: Start, perform and finish one task at a time.

Time management is a skill that helps you avoid rushing and stressing. Practiced daily, it can maximize your time by correctly identifying your priorities and how best to fulfill them — and help you maintain a positive attitude.

Reminder: Daylight Saving Time ends in the U.S. on Sunday, November 7 at 2:00 a.m. When you go to bed on Saturday, November 6, you'll turn back the clocks one hour if you live in an area that observes Daylight Saving Time. Don't forget devices and appliances, such as microwaves and ovens, that have clocks, too. Resist the urge to stay up late on the Saturday night of the time change. The National Sleep Foundation recommends going to bed at your usual time so you log an extra hour of sleep to offset any sleep debt. Gradually change your bedtime and wake-up time by 15 minutes every two days to ease the adjustment.

How to Avoid OVERTHINKING

When you overprocess, worry about, and overthink what's happening, you can block your natural intuition and instincts, making it harder to complete a task or achieve a goal.



A 2013 University of California Santa Barbara study found that there are two types of memory: implicit and explicit. **Implicit memory** recalls things with little conscious thought. It allows you to climb on a bicycle and start riding, for example. **Explicit memory**, on the other hand, involves conscious effort and thought.

When researchers stimulated the prefrontal cortex in subjects' brains — the area responsible for complex thinking — people's performance on memory tests suffered. Subjects did better when they relied on intuition and implicit memory, rather than intense thought, to remember and answer questions.

Too much thinking is also linked to poor performance under pressure. When you overanalyze a task, you may become unable to act. This is sometimes called **analysis paralysis**.

SIGNS of overthinking:

- ➔ Questioning decisions, or putting off decisions until you have considered every angle.
- ➔ Thinking about one task or problem obsessively, to the exclusion of everything else on your schedule, costing time and energy.
- ➔ Frequently procrastinating or falling behind.
- ➔ Worrying excessively.

WAYS TO STOP overthinking:

- ➔ Work on something other than the task you're thinking about for a while, to give your mind a rest.
- ➔ Stop thinking about everything that might go wrong. Instead, visualize successfully completing the task.
- ➔ Don't wait until conditions are right and you've considered every pro and con. Trust your instincts and act.

Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Signs of Depression**, is at personalbest.com/extras/21V10tools.



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