



# Attention focus and control

## Attention control

The five principles of attention control:

1. Where your attention focus goes, you go!
2. Attention is governed by need. Never forget that you define the need!
3. You can only focus on one thing at a time.
4. Your attention is dynamic. Attention can shift from an internal focus such as to your thoughts or to what is happening in the body or to external factors the scoreboard, spectators, or the opponent. Your attention focus can also be very narrow like focusing on thought or very broad like the entire stage.
5. Attention control is a skill that can be developed. You want to learn what your target is and learn to keep it on the target.

## Mental Toughness

1. Your attention is on target!
2. Your attention stays on target!
3. If your attention shifts off target, you bring it back!

**Mental toughness is about directing your attention where you want it and keeping it there.**

**If you get distracted you successfully redirect your attention immediately.**

## Characteristics of Flow

1. The demands of the task match the level of skill required to perform the task.
2. A sense of flow or ease.
3. A present – in the moment- focus of attention. No thoughts of victory! No thoughts of defeat!
4. A heightened sense of enjoyment or excitement.



S E M I N A R S

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## **The Five Stages of Peak Performance©**

### **Stage I. The foundation**

What is your goal or intention?

Why are you pursuing this goal? What is your motivation?

How are you committed to being as you pursue this goal?

**Write down three words that describe how you are committed to being as you perform.**

Trigger words: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Stage II. Ready!**

Skill acquisition and mastery – Practice, Practice, Practice!

Constant self-awareness: evaluate, critique, experiment, observe, adjust.

Mental preparation/visualization.

How are you being as you pursue your goal?

What is incomplete? What is your plan to complete it?

When you plan your work and work your plan, your plan works!

**Important:** Declaring your preparation complete allows you to perform with freedom. Declare complete what is incomplete!

### **Stage III. Set!**

Get yourself mentally and physically set to perform.

Physical preparation includes your costume, props, transportation, food, grooming, etc.

Being mentally set: attention control and positive self-talk.

Pre-performance routines (warm-up routines) to access motor programs. No Rituals!!

Trigger words to access the desired mental states for the performance.

How are you being? Confident, Expressive, Bold!

### **Stage IV. Go!**

The performance.

Step into the sandbox, stay in the sandbox! Go Play!

Limited self-awareness, a present focus of awareness, ease, flow, in the zone.

No thoughts of victory, no thoughts of defeat!

### **Stage V. The post performance debriefing**

Each performance is a practice in performing.

What worked?

What didn't work?

What will you do next time?

**No post performance bashing!**



## The Performance Attitude Questionnaire (Short form)

Complete the following sentences. Just put down whatever comes to mind.

- \_\_\_ Performing is...
- \_\_\_ I know I am ready to perform when...
- \_\_\_ The audience...
- \_\_\_ Criticism is...
- \_\_\_ What I like most about performing is...
- \_\_\_ Mistakes are...
- \_\_\_ I'd have more confidence if...
- \_\_\_ I get stressed out when...

## The Performance Profile Questionnaire (Short Form)

The **Performance Profile Questionnaire** explores different aspects of your experience as a performer. Read each question and reflect on your personal experience.

Answer each sentence as **TTrue, FFalse or SSometimes.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I usually feel anxious before I perform.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I am easily distracted when I perform.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I usually feel confident about my performance preparation.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I critique my performance while I am playing.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I am afraid of mistakes.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I often think about past "bad" or embarrassing performances.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I am critical of myself.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I have confidence in my ability to perform well.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I often wonder what others think of my playing.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy performing.