

Pre-Match Routine

Deep Breaths: Focusing on my breath in and out. Not holding any thoughts in my mind; just mindful breathing, following my breath all the way in and all the way out feeling my chest rise and fall.

Positive Talk: Know what you will tell yourself before each match and if/when you have any doubts. Remember our thoughts are fighting for the stage and light. Only one act can be on stage at a time and if you want the “bad” act to leave the stage, you have to call the good act back on stage; meaning you would be replacing the negative thoughts by calling the good act back on stage. **Driving and directing your thoughts.** The easiest way to do this is to keep pumping good thoughts into your head, finding specific words, memorizing them, and processing them (Scripture, quotes, song lyrics, etc). Play them in your mind continually, especially when negative thoughts come. **DRIVE YOUR THOUGHTS!!!** Only you are responsible for everything you think, say, do and feel.

Element of fun: Something physical you do to remind yourself you love competing. Singing, DANCING, listening to music, smiling.

Visualization: If your mind is very busy or if it’s helpful then you can focus on the process before you go out there. Picture getting to your tie ups, scoring your takedowns, getting your hand raised. Picture how good you will feel after you expend a ton of energy and give a full effort. Visualize as much detail as possible. Color, sounds, smells, and try to incorporate feelings throughout the process.

Blow Your Lungs: You have to have a consistent patented warm up. Something that you practice and can mindlessly do on competition day. I knew exactly what it took to get my body going, break into a good sweat, and get that uncomfortable feeling out of my system so I felt better off the whistle. It takes practice, tinkering, focus, and discipline.

State of Mind: Get yourself in the optimal state of mind before you step out on the mats. It’s your responsibility! All of the things above should help direct your focus. I would always like to step out on the mat with a clear mind and very light heart. Laughing, smiling, and anxiously excited like I was about to presents on Christmas day. There is no place in the world, I would rather be in that moment.