

Stress and Motivation

Submitted By: Sara Thibeault

Sometimes competition can be stressful, but if you know how to handle it, a little bit of stress can be helpful!

First things first: **remember why you are working hard in practice.** If you are working hard in practice just because “mom dropped you off and she’ll pick you up in an hour,” that’s not a very good reason. Think of all the things you love about baton: it’s so much fun, your friends are at baton competitions and practices, it’s exciting to learn and master a new trick, you are really proud of yourself for working hard to get really good at what you do, you love to perform for everyone, and the list goes on and on. Sometimes just taking a second to grab a drink and think about how much you love to twirl can be the extra spark it takes to get that one really tricky part of your routine!

Don’t forget to remember **how hard you worked in practice.** Sometimes it is easy to forget all the hours spent at practice. If you are feeling nervous about a trick, remind yourself that you have done a billion of that trick in practice, and this is just another one of the billion times that you are doing that trick. Be confident in what you are going to do. The old cliché that “whatever you say you are going to do (succeed or fail) is how you will do” is still true. Believe in yourself and all the time and effort you spent! (And don’t forget to thank your coach for being there for every second you spent working hard!)

Last, but not least, remember that **you are in control of your performance.** You don’t get to decide who wins, how your competition does, or whether or not the floor is too slippery. Those are things you can’t control. You can control what you do in practice and out on the floor, and you control how you feel before, during, and afterwards. Don’t worry about what everyone else is doing. Do what feels right for you, and you’re way more likely to have a good twirl.

Sources:

- Concepts of Physical Fitness: Active Lifestyles for Wellness, 15th Edition (2009) by C. Corbin, G. Welk, W. Corbin, and K. Welk.
- Sport and Exercise Psychology: A Canadian Perspective, 2nd Edition (2010) edited by P. Crocker.

About the Author

Sara Thibeault is the CBTF Athletes' Rep. She has been twirling competitively for 15 years. In addition to twirling, she enjoys assistant coaching with the Sundown Optimist Buffalo Gals. Currently, Sara is studying Education at the University of Regina.

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