

Three Mental Habits for Practice Room Success

I. Practice Mindfully

"Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally, as if your life depended on it." – Jon Kabat-Zinn

- **Pause Before You Begin**

Close your eyes and take a few deep, slow breaths. Give yourself one minute to focus your attention before you start practicing.

- **Be Like the Eye of the Hurricane**

When you feel stressed or distracted in the practice room, breathe. Give yourself a moment to center your attention. Imagine that you are the calm eye of a hurricane.

II. Keep Your Motivation Fire Burning

- **Maintain Long- and Short-Term Goals**

Pick a long-term goal that may seem a little crazy right now (but not *too* crazy). Develop a series of short-term goals that empower consistent day-to-day progress.

- **Make Practice Non-Negotiable**

Create a daily practice schedule and stick to it. Before you go to sleep each night, make sure you know when you will practice the next day.

- **Focus on the Process, Not the Result**

Once you know what you want to accomplish, focus your attention and your effort on how you will get there, rather than the goal itself.

III. Develop a Positive Attitude

- **Visualize Your Past Success**

Take a moment to recall a performance that you felt good about. Give yourself 3-5 minutes to re-live that experience in as much detail as possible. Remember what it looked like, sounded like, how you felt during the performance, and how you felt afterward.

- **Visualize Your Future Success**

Choose an upcoming performance and visualize yourself giving a compelling, exciting, powerful performance. What will it look like and sound like? How will you feel during the performance? Visualize finishing the performance to raucous applause, receiving hugs from friends and family, and feeling joy in your accomplishment.

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