

## *The Yourell Mental Rehearsal Recipe: Advanced Mental Rehearsal, v. 2c*

Advanced Mental Rehearsal is a single-page handout, starting on the next page, is formatted to print on a regular 8 ½" x 11" sheet. It is for self-use, or for coaches and therapists to offer their clients. It is formatted for nice printing. You are legally required to honor the copyright notice.

I have been using this handout for many years to prepare people for situations that were challenging. Many people are aware of mental rehearsal for sports or other performance demands, but there is a great need for this in relationships, workplaces and other situations.

As a therapist, I am very concerned with helping people eliminate well-practiced automatic responses, especially those that are initiated largely from primitive brain areas that do not respond well to will power and words. I am also concerned with resolving trauma symptoms such as out-of-proportion emotional reactions, reduced self-control and cognitive deficits. This process is especially suited to these problems, because it targets areas of the brain that need something more than words in order to change their reactions.

The skills and understanding that take this process to its potential are not entirely obvious, so I help people learn these things in an individualized way, and to resolve symptoms of trauma and other problems.

### **Copyright Notice**

This document is protected by copyright, with the following **rights reserved**:

- You may use it as a handout, or in assessment, research, teaching or presentations, but the title (Advanced Mental Rehearsal) and brief copyright notice with my name must be present.
- You may not publish it online. Instead, link to it, guaranteeing the most up-to-date version.
- Regardless of how it is used, you must include at least the basic copyright notice, at minimum: "© 1996, Robert Yourell, all rights reserved."
- You may reformat the text to be part of another work, but you may not edit the text itself.

# Advanced Mental Rehearsal

## Introduction

This is an excellent way to be in the right state of mind to handle a challenging situation. The higher the stakes, the more important it is that you use this.

Use this process for top performance in just about anything-- coping with an upsetting person, public speaking, sports, creating a better relationship, etc.

### Why do this style of mental rehearsal?

- ◆ It turns the challenging situation into a “trigger” for high quality performance.
- ◆ It turns off the anxiety and submission instincts that interfere with your performance.
- ◆ It turns on focus, confidence, and creativity.
- ◆ It perfects your skills with a “no-risk” perfection session any time you wish.

Researchers know a lot about why this works. Your brain areas that regulate the fight-or-flight response and dominance, and your ability to accelerate your learning of motor skills with simple acts of imagination are the keys.

## Step I: Set Up

1. Pick the situation. in which you want to perform at your best.
2. Think: what results do you want? What kind of performance equals excellence?
3. Remember: it's important to bring the best out in others, to be honor your team, and to let your growing confidence and truth speak louder than your struggle.

## Step II: Get the Right State

1. Ask yourself, "What would be the best way I could possibly *feel*, to be at my best in this situation?"
2. Ask yourself, "What words or phrases *express* the ways I want to feel in the situation?"
3. Ask yourself, "*When* have I ever felt anything like that, or like some part of that?"

## Step III: Amplify the state

1. Start getting that ideal feeling by thinking of the *past* experiences and words and phrases.
2. *Amplify* the feelings just like adjusting a television: brightness, volume, intensity, etc.
3. If the feelings are weak, *describe* them to yourself with words like “confident, poised, clear,” and go to the next step.

## Step IV: The Rehearsal

1. *Imagine the situation* as if you were watching yourself in a movie.
2. Imagine that you are fully in that ideal feeling, *as shown by* your face, posture, movement, and voice.
3. If you don't like how the fantasy goes, *rewind* it a bit and adjust it until you like what you see.

**Special tip:** if the fantasy seems to have a mind of its own, you have probably found some deeper resistance to change. If so STOP right there and really focus your highest intentions on changing it at that point to be positive. Don't get stuck in anger or being a victim, for example. If you run into too much trouble, coaching or counseling might be your best bet.

## Step V: The Special Ending

**This part is very important.** This part of the process turns off the anxiety your primitive brain areas produce in the situation. *This is critical* to changing your physical reaction and *making room* for your creative, focused confidence.

**This process isn't intended to build unrealistic expectations, or to use magic.** It is designed to improve your readiness for the real situation.

**Choice 1, Understanding:** This ending is good when you are dealing with someone who upsets, angers or hurts you. In your imagination, have them express a perfect understanding of your highest, positive motives and intentions. In other words, they show that they really understand why you are doing what you are doing, and they explain it to you really well. Push past your anger and let go of your usual ways of picturing this.

**Choice 2, Winning:** If performance is the number one priority, as with sports, sales, testimony, etc., imagine the perfect outcome. Really get into the details of it. For example, see yourself at your best, then getting the trophy.

## Guidelines

- ◆ **Mental rehearsal is an art. You increase its value by advancing your skills, and aligning your motives. Get coaching or training from an expert. Be honest and accurate about the benefits, and about what your past patterns tell you that you need.**
- ◆ Do this once a day, or whenever the issue is on your mind, like at a stoplight. If you're too busy, do it just before bedtime.
- ◆ If you go to sleep easily, do it sitting up.
- ◆ To stay on track, refer to this sheet as you go.
- ◆ Don't just try it once, keep the faith and keep at it for a month. See you how you feel!
- ◆ Keep refining your idea of excellent performance, and keep expanding your sense of the idea states for these situations. You may be surprised at how much you can learn about what these two things really mean.