

Visual Memory (*Visualization*)

What happens physically and psychologically when an athlete excels at his most important game, the actor surpasses any of his previous engagement and the lecturer delivers his newest theory with ease?

Each instance exposes the performer's vulnerability. Thus he guards his emotions with great care. He measures every move, word, or facial expression. His emotional stability and mood depends greatly on the physiological and psychological state of the performer at the moment of execution. Psychologist and scientist refer to such a moment as peak performance, a term most widely known in the field of sports. The true definition of peak performance is "a state of altered consciousness" (Ravizza 1984, p.453). The experience of an altered state during peak performance clearly separates the elite from the non-elite. Even though the term has a competitive connotation, peak performance extends into the ordinary lives of every human being. Athletes, actors, business people, public speakers or politicians, just to name a few, know the importance of a well-delivered speech or performance. However, the simple thought of an upcoming event may create an enormous state of anxiety producing fear, inhibitions, nervousness and insecurities. When the individual feels upset, then there is a disharmony within the body and mind. The balance is off center and either psychologically or physiologically the mind-body connection is interrupted. The performer requires time to restore harmony within in order to excel. One of the most powerful tools is visual exercises and their powerful effects.

Peak performance and visualization comprise of similar physiological components and can render an equal relaxed state of mind. Once the individual knows how to tap into his visual modality it becomes a routine to visualize the performance. This profound exercise let's him review his performance in stillness. Just like a slide show he brings each step into focus. Each photograph transmits the most accurate and critical understanding of his own performance. Scientists have established that the information assembled within the brain is a three-dimensional hologram, which allows the spectator or the performer in this case, to view his own work. The holographic model in essence represents a hologram, which sheds light on his own abilities. With ease he learns to transfer all his skills from one place to the other. Pribram stated the following: If the picture of reality in our brains is a hologram based on interference patterns, then the objective reality may exist as an illusion resonating a symphony of wave forms which transforms into the world as we know it only after it enters our senses. In other words a hologram is a three-dimensional image reconstructed in space from the information encoded on a two-dimensional source. Therefore, it is not surprising, that physicists theorize the flexibility of the brain by memorizing an object in a language of waveforms and tumbling the internal hologram around to examine it from any perspective possible. (Talbot, 1992, p.24.) Emotional stability and mental focus are required to experience the physiological harmony of mind and body. A performer can not fake happiness or joy without a physiological change-taking place. Mind and body relate every thought to each other via messengers also known as neuropeptides. These tiny little molecules respond with lightening speed to the mind's command and relate each move and emotion between body and mind. Most importantly, however, is the physical association with the hologram, which resonates within him for a long time and also leaves him with the imprint of a model to follow.

The focus point of the hologram and the harmony of the emotional and physiological states surround the center of the performer's attention. His visualization gives life to the real experience. The individual feels, hears and sees himself as an equal to the image within and therefore, establishes his comfort zone. Through repetitious exercises the performer adjusts to every little detail and visualizes the realization of the actual event. The performer and his act begin to overlap with each other and bring a flow of energy to the two properties. The experience exhilarates, synergy occurs and the performance peaks.

The correlation between peak performance and visualization are intertwined with mind and body and work in perfect harmony. They feed off each other's synchronicity and neither can exist without the other.

Although the seriousness of attaining a goal depends solely on the performer's will power to succeed and only he can make the appropriate changes. Studies show that highly talented people look beyond the immediate to gain the competitive edge and when it happens, they know.

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