

10 TIPS FOR PSYCHING UP

1. Goals:
 - a. Set specific, realistic, reasonable goals
 - b. Set more than one goal
For example: race outcome time expectations (great, good, okay times)
split time expectations
self-assessment goals (ex: use of pain management strategies)
2. Know the race course, and plan your strategy accordingly
3. Review all the pre-race and race details—from clothing and vaseline to water stop strategies. Control what you can. Be organized about what you know AND be curious about what you don't know.
4. Learn how to regulate your level of tension, and use relaxation techniques before and during the race to control tension:
deep breathing
muscle tensing and relaxing
5. Develop some positive (and realistic) self-statements or affirmations (for example: “I am doing the best that I can”) and “mood words” (such as “power” or “strength”)—and say them to yourself during the race. Use the rhythm of running to augment the thoughts. Use these thoughts and words especially at those moments when negative thoughts show up—because they're surely likely to do so during the race.
6. Use imagery before and during the race. For example:
 - a. imagine yourself at difficult points in the race, feeling calm, focused, and energetic
 - b. plan for, and during the race use, specific images (visual, phrases, words) at particular cue spots
7. Make use of “thought” strategies:
 - a. association: scanning your body, stride, respiration, etc.
 - b. dissociation: musical phrases, counting trees, thinking of friends (cheering you on)
8. Run for yourself, not against someone else
9. Expect that at least some thing which you planned won't go the way you planned it. Decide now how you will forgive yourself then.
10. Have fun!