

Managing Anxiety, Pressure & Nerves



Nerves mean you care. They are energy – not danger.

Before competition, your brain activates the fight-or-flight system. Adrenaline increases your heart rate, breathing quickens, and muscles prepare for action.

This is your body preparing you to perform, not warning you to stop. Your body is not against you. It is preparing you.

Anxiety vs Excitement

- Both increase heart rate
- Both create butterflies
- The difference is the story you attach to the feeling



Using Breathing Techniques

- Box Breathing: 4 in – 4 hold – 4 out – 4 hold (repeat 5 times)
- 4-7-8 Breathing: 4 in – 7 hold – 8 out
- Long Exhale: 4 in – 6 out for 1-2 minutes

If Panic Spikes

- Pause and step aside.
- Ground yourself: 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear.
- Slow your breathing.
- Remind yourself: 'This feeling will pass.'

Post-Performance Reset

- Slow deep breathing
- Evaluate your effort, not just the result
- Reset your body language before rejoining team



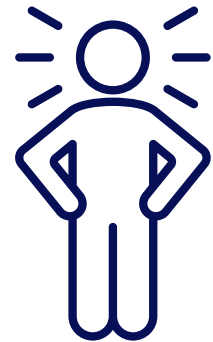
Act How You Want To Feel



Feelings follow actions. Confidence is often acted before it is felt.

Posture affects your breathing. Breathing affects your heart rate. Heart rate affects your emotional state. Your body can lead your mind.

- Stand tall.
- Slow your movements.
- Keep your chin level.
- Control your breathing.



The Confident Swimmer Walk

- Eyes forward.
- Relaxed shoulders.
- Steady breathing.
- Purposeful steps.

Choosing Behaviour Over Emotion

You cannot always control how you feel. You can always control how you behave. Behaviour repeated consistently builds identity.

Who do you want to be today?

- Focused?
- Calm?
- Brave?

Decide – then act accordingly



Act calm until you become calm