

Building Psychological Toughness

Using mental training strategies to build psychological toughness is critical to strengthening physical fitness and maintaining individual and mission readiness. The Navy SEALs have used these mental strategies for years to stay strong, resilient and ready for action. Consider using the following strategies, or create one of your own, to help build and maintain psychological toughness.



Breathing

Poor and fast breathing often occurs when we are feeling stressed, tired or challenged. Slowing down our breathing and breathing deeply from the belly can help us regroup, focus and get energy. Take a minute to slowly breathe from your abdomen.

Staying Calm

Use mental imagery to create a positive and peaceful place for you to go in your mind. Imagine being in the woods, at the beach or any other location that is peaceful and relaxing for you. Take in the sights, smells and sounds. Absorb all the positives from your tranquil place. Enjoy it. Return calmer and refreshed.

Laughing

Yes, humor can get us through many a difficult moment. Laughing can help with distraction and can help your mindset through the tough times.

Going With It

“Embrace the suck” is a famous phrase used by the SEALs. They use it to get through rough and challenging times; and say it aids with not complaining, questioning or giving up. Consider using the phrase or developing your own.

Feeding the Positive, Not the Negative

It is easy to fall into and get trapped in a negative perspective. To identify your mind set, stop and ask yourself the question — Am I feeding the fear animal or supporting the courage animal? The SEAL answer is to nourish the courage animal. This may help move negative thinking into positive thinking and build a can-do approach.

Having Grit

Find the commitment, perseverance and determination to achieve your goals, on a daily and weekly basis.