

**Course Name: Sports Psychology**  
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IMAGERY IN TEAM - A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION

Welcome to session 3 of module 4. Here we are going to be demonstrating an imagery training exercise. How imagery is being done in teams. To do this we have two young budding basketball players. We have Ms. Niharika who is a current state player and junior international and we have Ms. Pavni who is also a current state player.

Thank you both for coming here and you know going through this exercise with us. So both these players represent the Karnataka state team. They are also part of the club and also of the college team.

So they combine together to play and that is the reason why they both are here today. And also when we look at teams it may not be possible to do imagery exercises for the entire team of 12 players. So since these two are combined together and one is a forward and the other one is a point guard or one is a post and the other one is a point guard it becomes easier for them to combine. So Pavni and Niharika will be starting this imagery training program. So firstly I will be explaining to you what imagery is.

Imagery is a very simple exercise. What you do in imagery is you are recreating an image in your mind. You recreate an image of something that you already know like an apple or a flower or a rose or something that you already know because you have already seen it and you know how it looks and you have a concept about how a rose or an apple etc. would be. So after we recreate the image there are some things that we have to keep in mind.

So because we are going to be using it in sports and it is going to benefit you in your performance and you know also in your matches. We have to make use of all our senses. So

all the sense organs, I think you know right? That you should be able to see, that is the visual. Then you have the auditory ability to hear the sounds. Then you have the olfactory where you can hear. The smell- get the smell and then you have the tactile.

You know tactile is touch like feel the ball you know or even feel the opponents when you are defending. And then you have the kinesthetic movement that is you can feel the transfer of weight like when you are taking a jump shot or you take a layup shot, you can feel the leg movement. So that is the kinesthetic and also the other important aspect is your emotions. You know, you have to be happy when you are doing your visualization or are you excited? Is it fun? How is it like, you know? That is the emotions. These are the things that you have to keep in mind and the other important aspect is when we do the imagery or visualization as it is called you have to see the image very clearly. So if I tell you like you know, imagine a rose you should be able to imagine the rose in detail like the color, the structure, the stock everything.

That is the clarity or the vividness what they call. And the other aspect is controlling. So you should control to see what the image is like. If I say imagine a rose you should be able to imagine a rose of a color that you want. Which you feel is comfortable to you. So that is how you control an image. So to help us understand and to go through this exercise we are doing 3 basic exercises. First is a very general scene which I am going to ask you to imagine.

The second exercise will be a skill related to basketball, which you can think an image. And the third one is a guided imagery where I am going to read a script to you and both of you are involved in the play and you will have to image and visualize and see the image and after each of the exercises we take feedback. How do you feel, can you see the image and you know could you see the image clearly etc. Basic information about the image that you ask you to do. So are you guys ready? Yes. Okay.

All right. So feel relaxed. All simple exercises. Okay. I want you to feel relaxed. Sit comfortably.

Okay. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath in, inhale, slowly exhale. We will do it one more time. Breathe in, slowly exhale.

One more time. Take a deep breath in and slowly exhale. I want you to feel positive and happy. Okay. Imagine a very beautiful and peaceful garden. The garden has beautiful flowers with different colors.

Nice green grass. Imagine the warmth on your skin as you walk around the garden. Imagine yourself moving around. Feel relaxed. Feel happy. Try to hear the birds in the background.

They are chirping and going from tree to tree. Try to get the smell of the flowers. Imagine the scene for a few seconds. Now slowly open your eyes and come into the present moment. Are you still in the garden or are you here? All right.

Okay. So I will ask each one of you, Niharika, were you able to image the garden? Yes. You are able to image. Okay. Any particular location or place that the garden was or no? It is just a garden.

Okay. Okay. What about you Pavani? Yes, I could also imagine. Okay. So Pavani here is undergoing the imagery and visualization exercise for the first time and Niharika I believe has already done some amount of visualization. So, we can ask them questions about that. So Pavani were you able to feel the warmth like all the senses? Were you able to feel the senses? Yes, except hearing.

Except hearing? You could not hear? Okay. That is good for a start I would say. Right? Yeah. What about you Niharika? I could hear everything.

You could get all the senses. Yeah, I could smell, hearing. Okay. That is good. So this is like a basic baseline imagery exercise.

So if you are able to image and if you are able to hear the sounds and all the senses, that means you have got good imaging ability and we could take it further to the next level. Okay. So in the next exercise I want both of you to imagine one skill in basketball that you want to image. Okay?

Any skill that could be, okay? And I want you to think about the skill. So are you ready? Have you thought about the skill? Okay fine. Alright. So what I want you to do again, 2 to 3

important things that we keep in mind when we do visualization or imagery is being relaxed. Either you sit in a comfortable position because right now we are sitting or even you could sleep when you are back home when you have time.

Feeling relaxed, comfortable and also having positive thoughts. Okay? And breathing is very essential because that is the way you are going to calm your nerves and that is how you can think. And during the process of the imagery some thoughts may come in.

Right? Like unwanted thoughts. Push it aside and then restart your imagery. Okay? So close your eyes. Feel relaxed. We take a deep breath in and exhale slowly.

One more time. Take a deep breath in and exhale slowly. Now imagine that you are in your practice ground or in your court. Nobody is there with you. It is just you and I want you to imagine you doing the skill.

Imagine the court. Imagine you doing the skill. And you can hear your teammates and other colleagues in the background talking. But nobody is watching you.

You are all alone. Okay. So imagine you are in your practice ground or in your court. But nobody is watching you. You are all alone. Image this for a few seconds. Now slowly open your eyes and come into the present moment.

Okay. So, Pavani, what skill did you imagine? Taking a layup shot. Right hand? Left hand? Right hand. Okay. And you were able to see yourself doing it? Did you see yourself converting the shot? Yes.

Okay. So that is also another crucial thing when you do imagery. Right? You should be seeing successfully you completing the skill, not making errors because that is the way you develop. What about you, Niharika? Taking a three pointer.

Three pointer? Okay. You are able to get it? Okay. Fine. What other aspects did you also see when you were doing this skill? Besides what I told you, did you see anything else? Like did you see what clothes you were wearing or you are wearing this? Okay.

Did you see yourself? Okay. And where were you practicing this? Kanteerava.

Same Kanteerava. That is nice. See the power of imagery, right? Like sitting here, you know, and in recording, in this imagery exercise, you are in Kanteerava stadium. That is the power of imagery, right? Did you have any difficulty doing the imagery? No? Okay. Nothing. And did you have any external thoughts that come in? No.

You were able to focus? Yes. Okay. I was just thinking about skill actually. if I should play under the board as a post or if I should take a three pointer.

Okay. Like you were deciding what to take it. Okay. And you are all by yourself, right? There is nobody else? Okay. So how did you feel after doing these two exercises? Like imagining the garden versus the skill, which was easier? The skill.

Skill. Skill is easier. Yeah. Yeah. I know, right? Because you are doing it on a day to day basis, right? Whereas the garden is, I mean, you do see, but you're not like focusing on it and everything.

Yeah. Right. Okay. That's good. I think we are having a good start and these two girls are showing good capability for imagery. Right? So now we move on to the third exercise. This is the guided imagery part, and I'm going to be reading the script to you and you both have to just follow what I tell you to do.

Okay. Step by step, follow what I tell you to do. So, the basics sit comfortably.

Okay. Feel relaxed. Close your eyes. Let's take a deep breath.

Inhale. Slowly exhale. One more time. Slowly inhale. Slowly exhale. Feel positive and happy. I want both of you to imagine that you're playing in a state championship tournament and your match has been announced. You go for your warm up along with the team. You both feel strong and fit as you jog and do your warm up and your exercises.

Now your team enters the court. You enter to take your practice layup shots. You convert each one of them, both the right and the left, and you feel very happy and positive. After the

layup, you start taking a few under basket shots, Niharika and Pavani, you take some two pointers and some three pointers. You convert them and you feel confident.

You hear the referee blow the whistle for the start of the match. The coach gives you last minute instructions and also assigns the man to you. The start of the jump ball, Niharika, you stand there for taking the jump ball. You jump and tap the ball. It's a good tap, but the tap is intercepted by the opponents and they dribble to the offensive court.

You start defending your man. The opponents start rotating the ball. They find one of their teammates is free. They pass it to her because the defense is lagging. She takes a three pointer attempt. She misses it. Niharika, you jump and you collect a very good rebound over your opponents.

You see Pavani waiting to receive the ball and you pass it to her. Pavani dribbles the ball to the front court and as you are dribbling, you plan what to do. You start rotating the ball to get an opening. Meanwhile, Niharika, you take position at the 45 degree angle. Pavani passes the ball to you, but the defense comes on to you.

So you pass the ball back to Pavani. Pavani is again looking for an opening. Time is ticking. Pavani sees an opening. She beats a man and drives in from the center. As you watch her driving, you cut in from the right side from the 45 degrees beating your man.

She passes the ball to you, a perfect bounce pass. You are able to collect the ball and take a perfect layup shot and it is a perfect basket. The crowd and your team is clapping for the shot. You both give hi-fis, feel confident and happy that you are able to combine together as a team and also convert the opening shot. The match has started on a positive note.

Both of you feel energized and you are happy about your good teamwork. Picture this in your mind and hold the picture for a few seconds. Now slowly open your eyes and come into the present moment. Any idea which state championship tournament you played, who your opponents were, any idea? It was the one we played under 18 two years ago. We were playing vanguard. So tell me Pavani how did you feel because this is your first experience in the visualization and imagery session.

How did you feel? Were you able to go through whatever I was telling you? Were you able to image? In the beginning it took me a little time to get used to it but by the time I was able to imagine everything, it was fine. It was a little bit different because I have never thought in such a way to imagine anything like this. I could imagine everything. You could see Niharika, you could see her standing, cutting, you could see yourself passing the ball to her? So coming to you Niharika, how was the experience? How did you feel? Could you imagine everything step by step when I told you? I remember a match that we played two years ago and I remember the warm up.

We were warming up outside in the parking area. Then we went in and we were talking to Jayavanti Ma'am. Then we entered. When you were saying man to man, when she was telling you man to man, I could imagine everything. That's because when we do an imagery script or when we do imagery, it has to be as close to the real life scene. Because if I tell you to just come and start playing the match, then I'm not creating the tempo.

So we have to create the script in such a way that you start from the very first step in when you get into the court and everything. So that's why it has to be as detailed and as real as the life line picture. How did you both feel? The first one was different. It was a general scene.

The second one, I told you to just image a skill and I didn't help you in any way. But here I helped you. I guided. So which do you think is better? Like doing things on your own? I mean imaging on your own or having someone to guide you? On your own, it's a bit easier. Is it easier? And when you are guided, you are forced to imagine what we are telling you or what is the thing? What is the basic difference? I feel like if we do it by ourselves, we have more freedom to think, to visualize whatever we want.

But when you were telling us, we would only visualize what you were telling us. So because we are working in teams, right? So when we are in teams, everybody has to image what the sequence would be or what the situation would be. If it is an individual skill like you taking a free throw or you taking a layup shot by yourself, then it could be an individual run because it's a team scenario where both of you are trying to combine with each other. That's why the guided script is imagined. Otherwise it's hard for you both to come up with a script, right? So that's how it is being done. So you do realize that doing this kind of a guided imagery script and working as a part of a team, you both could utilize it in other situations.

Probably like both of you could develop your own script or take my help to develop a script and do it. So see what is happening in imagery is, you are already there before you have entered the court. So if you do this imagery exercise before the competition, you are already there. So when you go to the court, nothing is new to you.

You already know what you're going to do, how you're going to do. I know that in sports and matches things come automatically because that's how you train. But when you know for sure what you want to do, it's going to be more useful and more effective to you. So I mean like if you look at this guided imagery script, were you able to feel happy? Were you able to experience the emotion? Could you see yourself giving a high five? So what's the difficult part about imagery? Because we work with a lot of athletes and introduce them to imagery and make them go through. What do you feel was important from imagery? What's your takeaway thing from this imagery exercise? Ma'am, I feel like the last thing that you told us to do since we've been playing together for so long so we could visualize it.

But the first exercise that you did, the garden. That was tough. That was a tough one. Yeah. Yeah. Because you know, that's a baseline exercise we do to identify whether you could do imagery or not.

Yeah. Or see, there is no problem if you cannot image. It doesn't mean that you don't have the skill. It's just that you need to practice because every time you're doing the, imagery, some thoughts come in and some are difficult.

So you need to concentrate. Yeah, it's important to concentrate. Yeah. What's your take home, Pavani? Because you've never done imagery and visualization, right? How do you feel about this exercise? And would you be using it in future? Yeah, I think it will help me be more calm in the future matches. If I imagine how I will warm up and like, just imagining how I'll enter the court. And then I'll imagine how powerful I feel. And then when I walk in the court next, I remember what I had imagined and just try to be more powerful. Yeah, I know that's one of the benefits of imagery, right? It helps you to be confident, it motivates you, it gives you that inner strength,, even I do it like many times you're called for lectures or conferences or something I image myself like wearing whatever I want to wear, standing there on the podium talking and seeing the crowd, you may not know the faces, but it gives

you that inner strength to be there and deliver what you're supposed to deliver, right? Yeah.

Sometimes you may have the skill, but you may be under confident also. And both of you occupy key positions in the state team as well as in the college and club, right? I mean, you're crucial players, like much of the, what do you say the complexity of the game depends on you both. So by practicing imagery, I think you can be more effective and be able to be more confident in the sport. Right? Yeah. Is there anything else that you would like to share? Like, you know, that I have not asked like in terms of feedback?

So it's a very powerful tool that you use. It's very powerful. And you can use it for anything. You can use it in daily life, you can use it in anything that you do, but the most important thing is to do it in the practice sessions, right? You can't think that, Oh, I'm going to do imagery for the match. You have to do it in practice sessions. So Pavani, since you're not being exposed to imagery, you can do for the practice sessions, like, you know, like before you go for the practice session, you can imagine doing free throw or imagine doing a layup or imagine yourself just doing some dribbling skills. So because most people, when we talk about psychological skills, they think it's only for the match.

It'll come with everyday and constant practice. So thank you both for being here. I hope you enjoyed the imagery exercise. It was really nice and fun to walk you through this imagery exercise and I hope you use it in your future. Okay. Thank you so much. Thank you, ma'am. Thank you.