

# GETTING IN THE ZONE:

## 10 MENTAL PREPARATION TIPS

Whether you're an experienced cyclist or a casual rider, participating in any cycling event not only requires physical training, but mental toughness.

As the official healthcare partner of Bike New York, the NYU Langone Sports Health experts share ten techniques to help you stay focused and resilient so you can overcome that bump in the road and reach your cycling goals.

### PRACTICE THESE TIPS DURING TRAINING:

- 1 Train Yourself to Relax.** Thoughts will pop in and out, but training the mind to remember a motivating word, sound, or phrase will dissolve those thoughts and help you return to focused breathing.
- 2 Focus on Breathing.** Stray away from distraction and notice your breathing.
- 3 Get Plenty of Sleep.** The active part of training is the stimulus for all of the adaptation responses that occur during sleep and, when sleep is low, athletic performance suffers.
- 4 Limit Caffeine Intake.** Drinking too much caffeine can trigger fight-or-flight response and emotions, like panic, can overrun your behavior.
- 5 Never Doubt Yourself.** When doubt rises remember your practice and training techniques and use positive self-talk.
- 6 Control Negative Thoughts.** During training, practice being aware of your inner voice. If it says something negative, use a "stop mechanism" to shift focus to the positive.
- 7 Say Positive Statements.** Repeating positive statements that inspire you, like "Yes, I can," will reduce anxiety and avoid panic.
- 8 Instructional Self-Talk.** Using training tools as statements to deflect panic and return to form, such as "Ride it like you stole it!" or "Own that hill!"
- 9 Visualize.** Imagine yourself at various points in the ride feeling calm, focused, and energetic.
- 10 Cue Spots.** Use specific images during the ride as markers toward your goal of reaching the finish line.

### Your Health Is Our Priority

The **Sports Health experts at NYU Langone** offer state-of-the-art diagnostics for cyclists, sports psychology assessments, and everything else you need to achieve your full athletic potential. As an official partner, they are offering all participants exclusive concierge access to their multidisciplinary team. Fill out our appointment request form at [nyulangone.org/bikeny](https://nyulangone.org/bikeny) and an expert will be in touch.