



Athletics
Ireland

Building a Performance Mindset

November 28th, 2020

Jessie Barr, Performance Psychologist, SII.

**What could I
improve?**



**What are my
strengths?**



What are the strengths of a top athlete?

- Determined
 - Patient
 - Positive
 - Confident
 - Consistent
 - Disciplined
 - Motivated
- Can perform under pressure

Physical

Psychological

**My
Strengths**

Technical

Tactical



“When I came off hurdle eight, and I still had nearly 100 metres to go, I was just like ‘nah, this French guy is mine, I’m getting this’. I’d be confident in my finish so I just thought it’s there and it’s mine.”

- Thomas Barr after winning a bronze at the European Athletics Championships



Build Confidence

b) Gather the “Evidence”

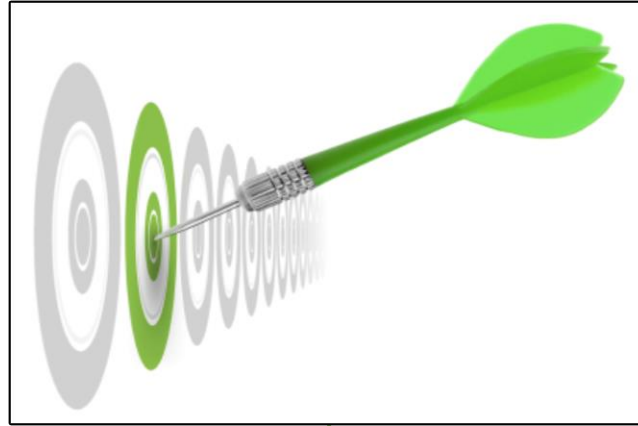
- ✓ What are all of the reasons or evidence that you can be confident of a good performance?
- ✓ What have you done that would make you feel confident?
 - ✓ Write them down and always update the list

"There are big mountains around, there are a lot of tidal factors to take into account, but I've spent a lot of time out there training and I feel really confident about the race courses."

- Annalise Murphy before the Olympic Games in Rio



Goal-setting



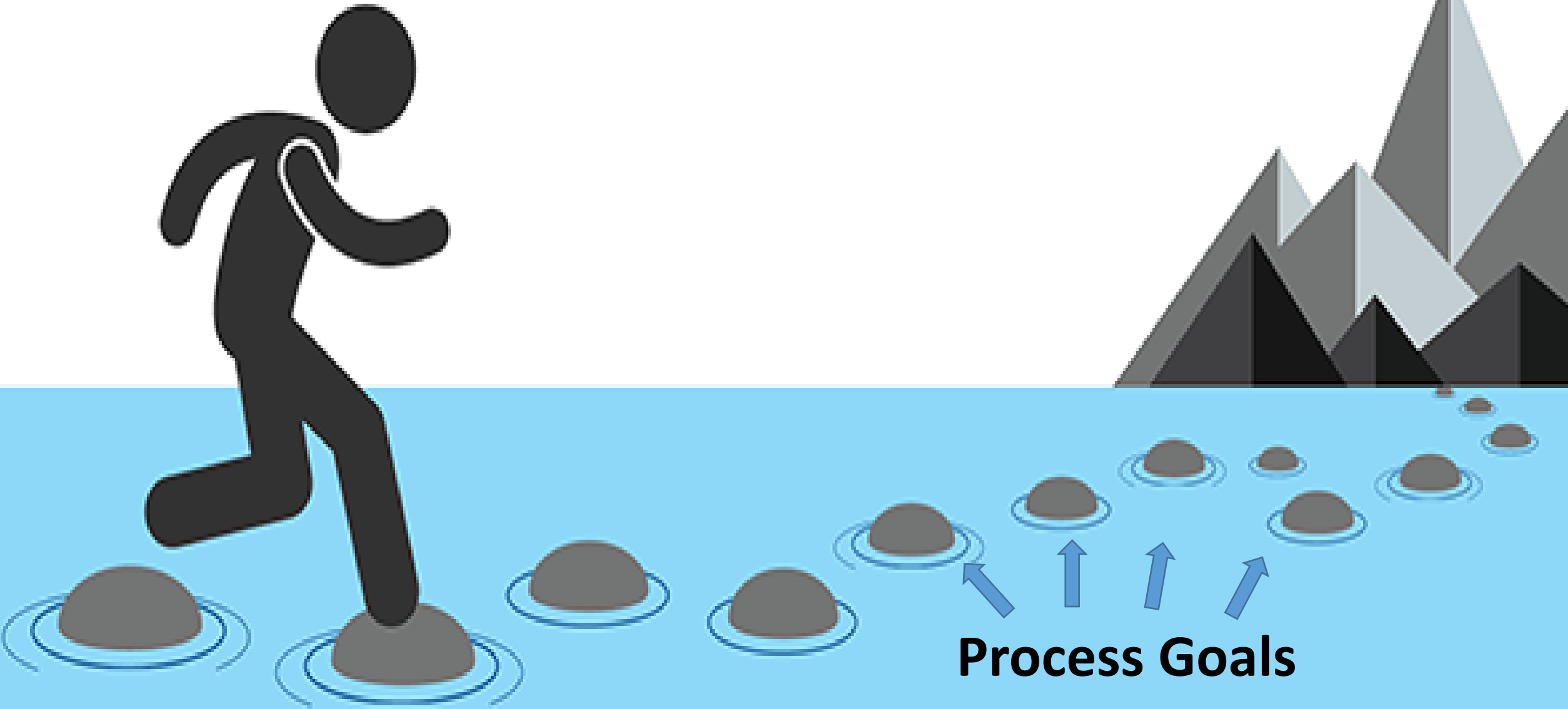
Outcome

Performance

Process

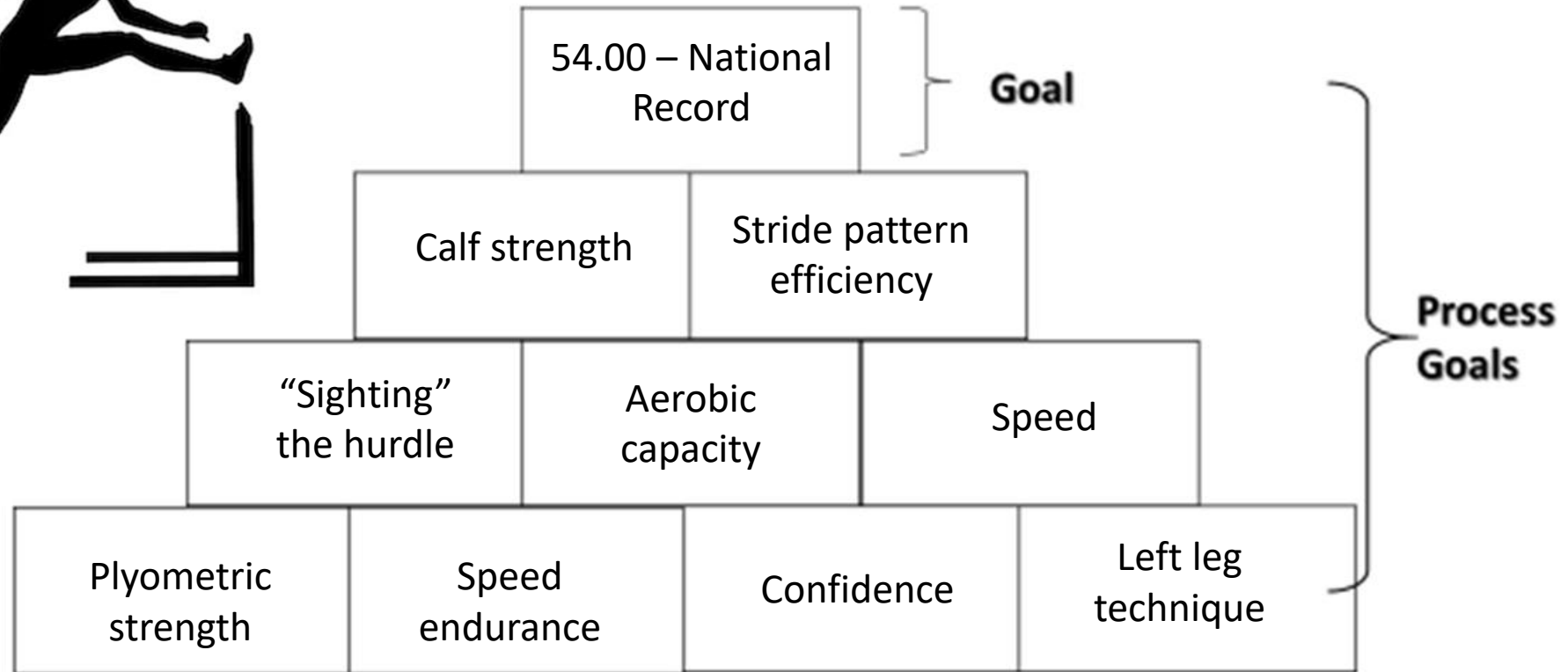
Set Process Goals

Goal

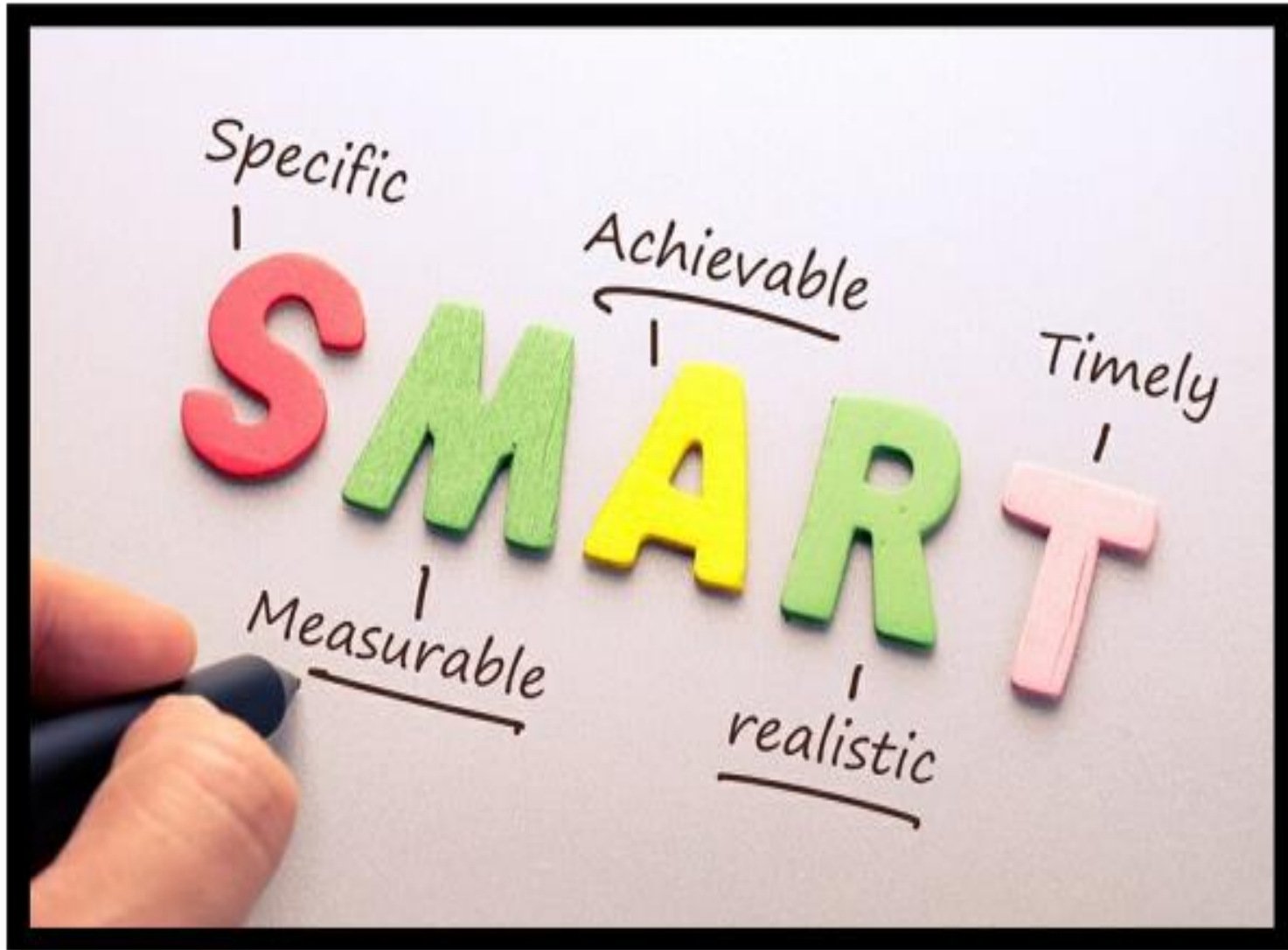


Process Goals

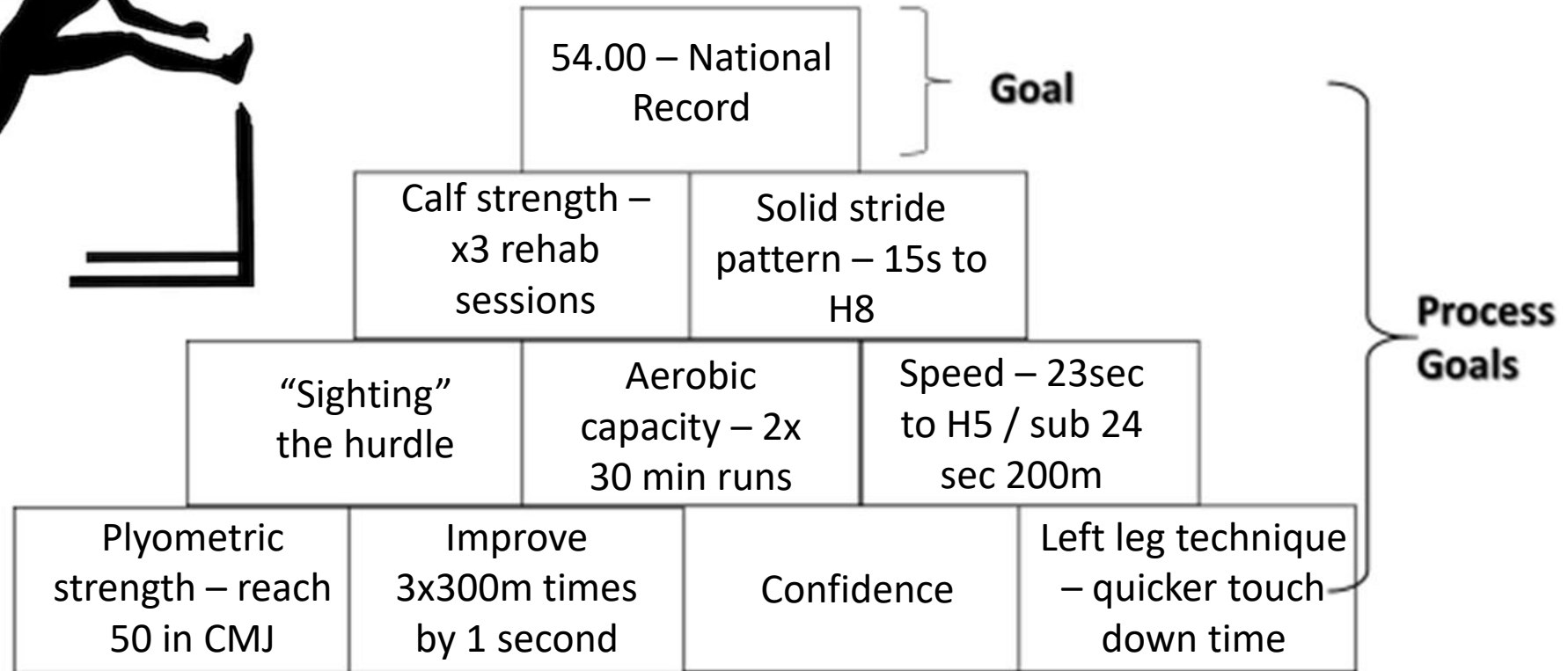
Process Goal-Setting



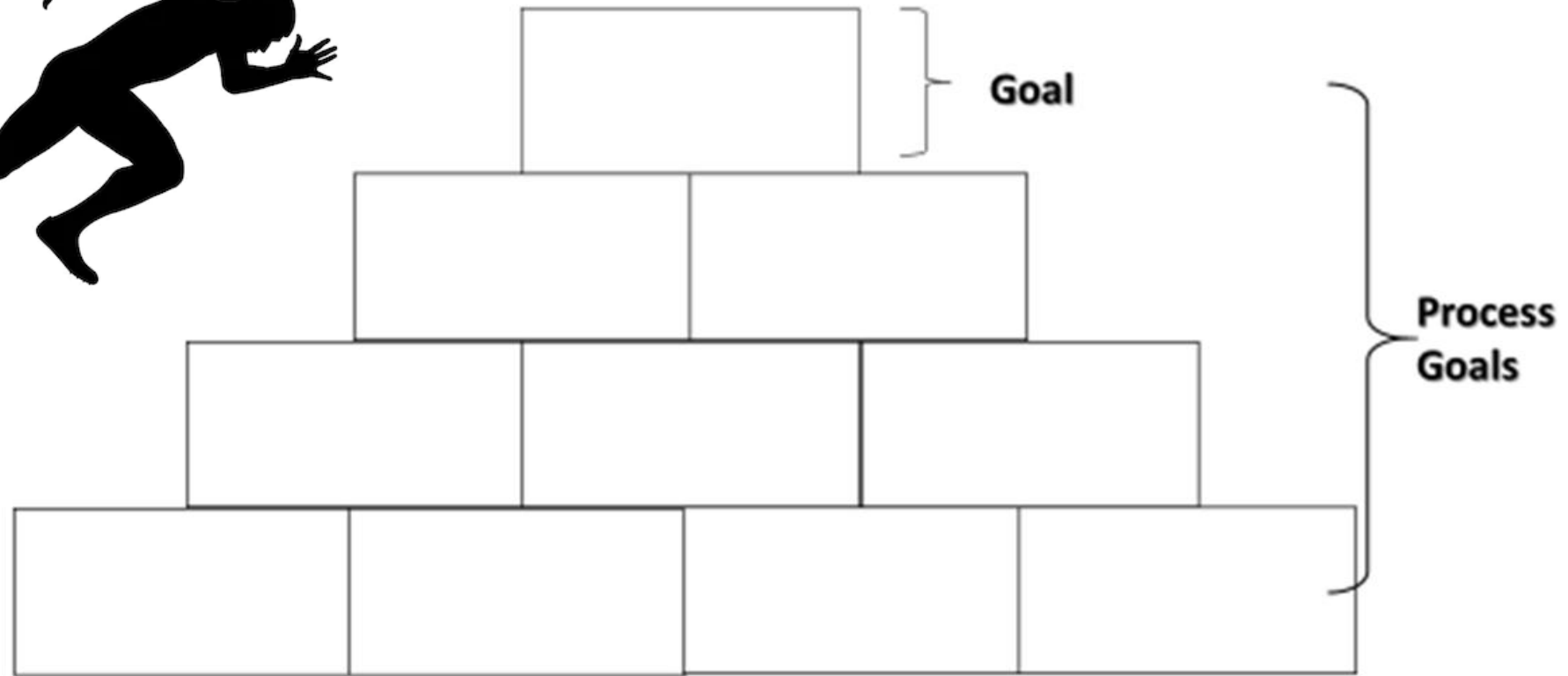
Keep your goals “SMART”



Process Goal-Setting



Process Goal-Setting



Track your Progress



Track your Progress

Make a note after training / races:

1. What went well? / What am I happy with?
 2. Why did it go well?
3. What didn't go well / What could have went better?
 4. Why didn't it go well?
5. What will I do to make sure it goes better next time?

Coping with Nerves





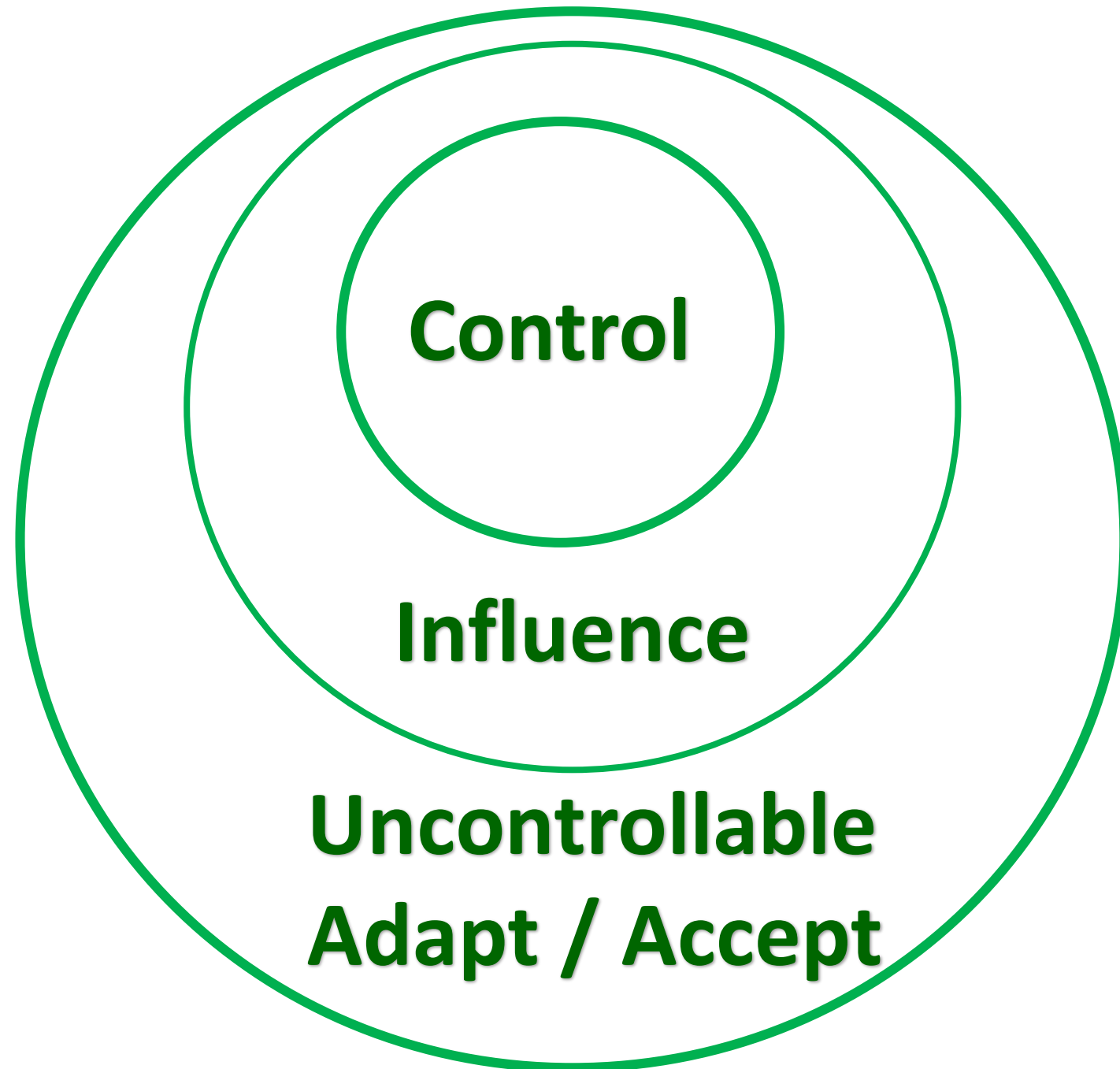
I'm glad I get nervous, it means I still care

How Nerves Affect Performance

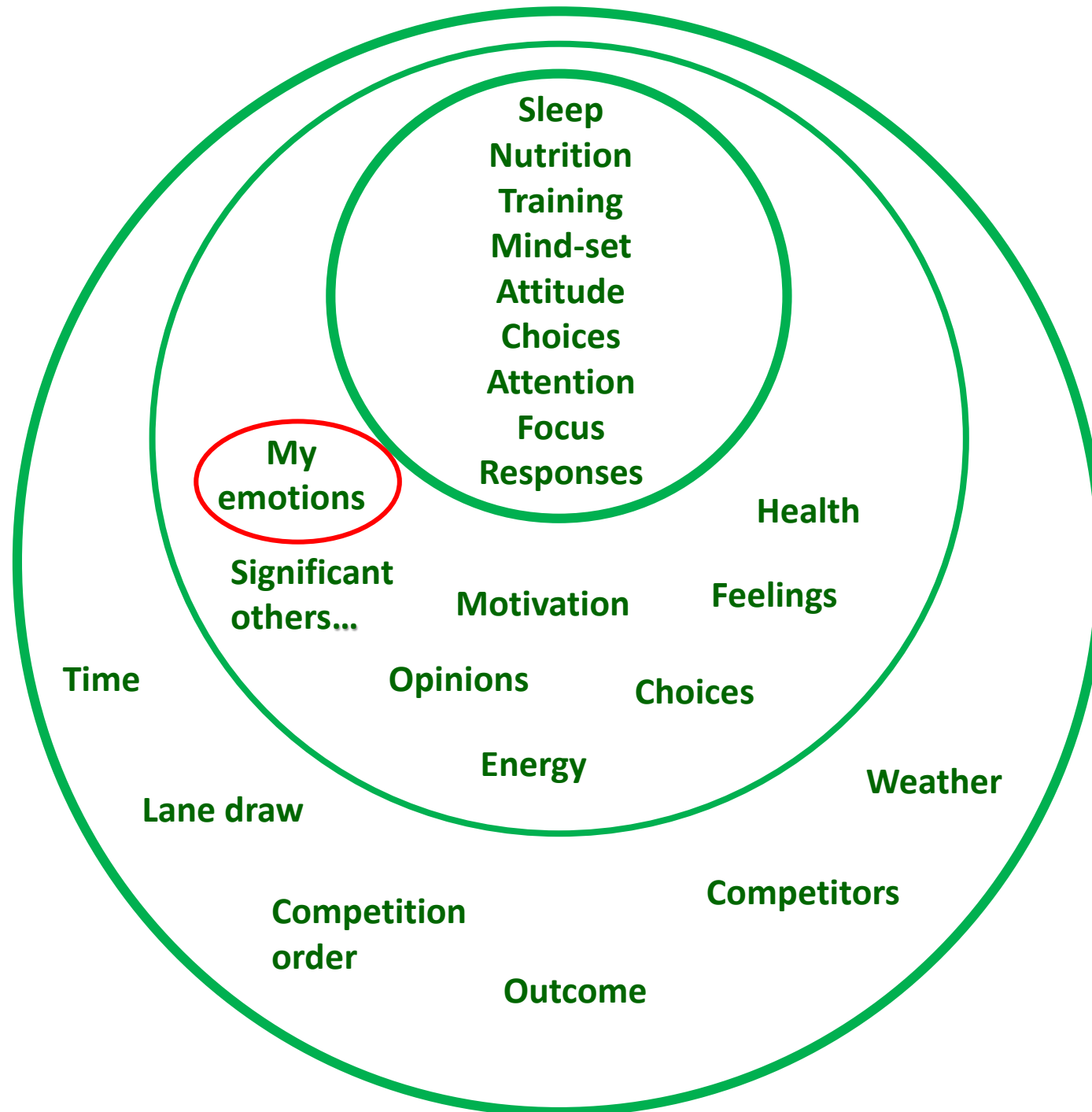
1. We start to see racing as a “threat”
2. Our attention gets narrower
3. We become more aware of how our body is feeling
4. We make decisions based on our emotions



Focus on the Controllables



Focus on the Controllables



Thoughts



Actions



Emotions

**“Today is the day I’ve
been preparing for all
year, I’m excited!”**

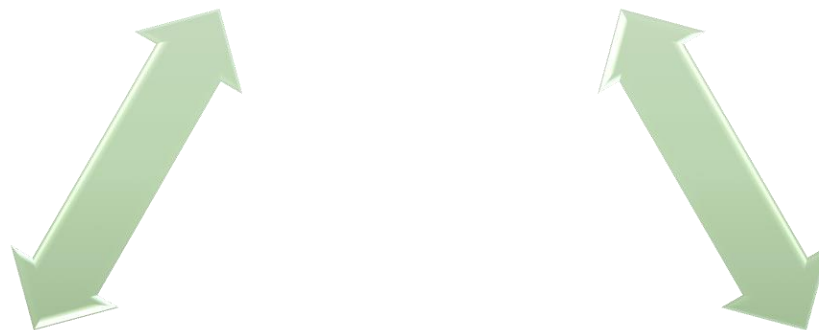


Focus on the process,



**Nerves, anticipation,
excitement**

**“Today is the biggest
race of the year, it
has to go well”**



**Make mistakes,
tense, get distracted,
stray from the plan**



**Nerves, panic, stress,
worry**

Watch your Self Talk



Speak to yourself like you would to your friends

Thought Challenging

I'm not good enough

I haven't done enough, I'm not ready

I lost to him / her before, I'll never beat them



But if you qualified to be here, of course you're good enough

You couldn't have done anything else, you did everything that your coach asked of you – you're ready!

This is a new competition, it doesn't matter what happened before!

Thought Reframing

Negative Thought

Positive / Constructive Thought

“I **need to** qualify for this competition”



“I want to qualify for this competition”

“I **should** win this race”



“I’m capable of winning...”

“I **have to** beat X”



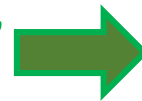
“I want to beat X”

“He / she is way better than me”



“He/she is more experienced...”

“I’m so tired, I can’t keep going”



“I’m meant to be tired now...”

Breathing Exercises

1. Belly breathing

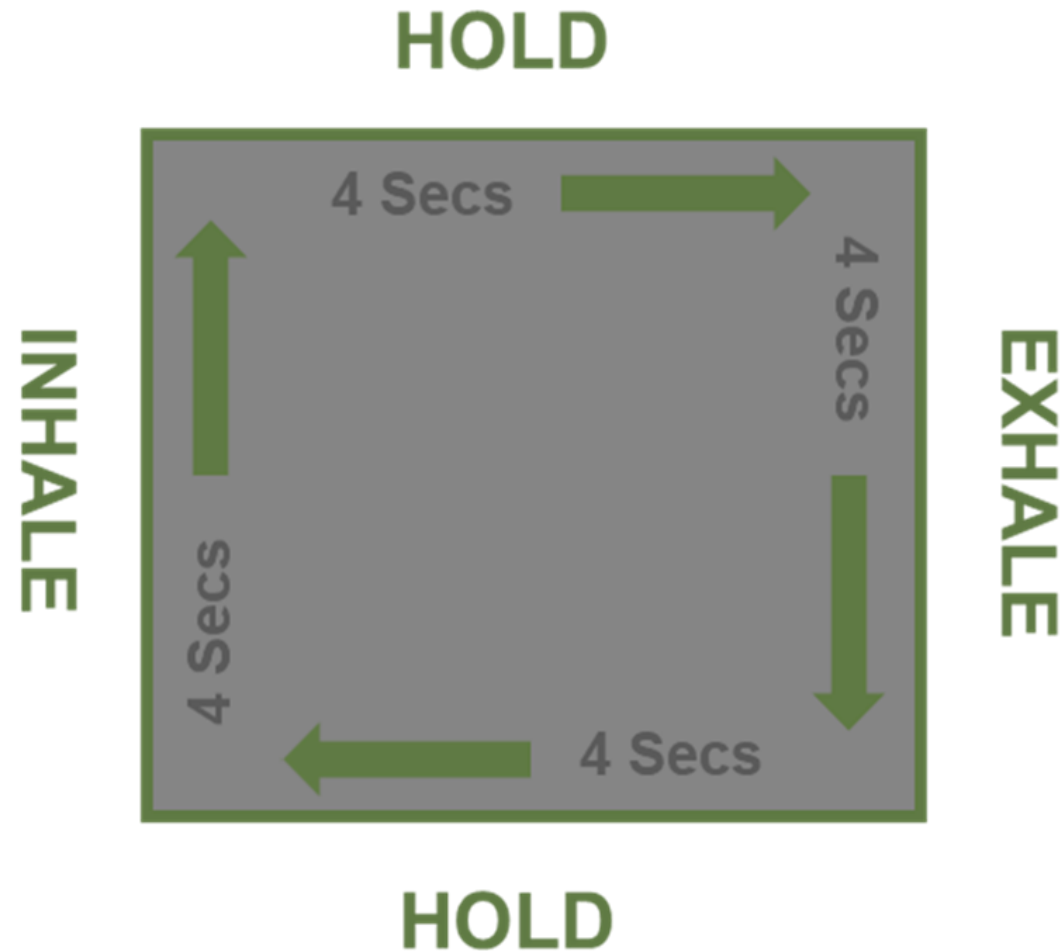
BREATHE IN, BELLY OUT

- Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.
- Inhale deeply through your nose for a count of four, making sure your belly abdomen is expanding and not your chest. Exhale for a count of four.
- Continue this breathing cycle for a few minutes.
- Feel the stress leave your body while your mind becomes calm.



Breathing Exercises

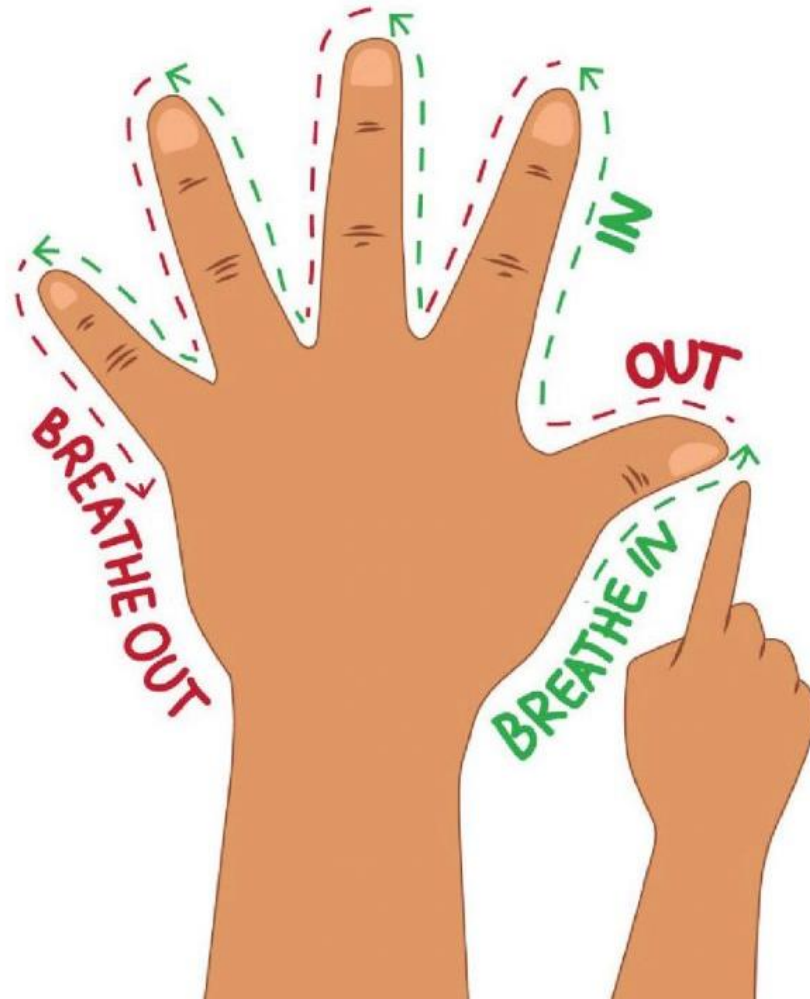
2. Box Breathing



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEmt1Znux58>

Breathing Exercises

3. Hand / Finger Breathing



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh79w9pn9Cg>

