

## **OUR WORRIES CAN DISTORT THE REALITY OF OUR GAME**

### **By Stanley Popovich**

At times, our worries and anxieties can overwhelm us. In addition, our worries can distort our perception of how we play hockey. Here is a brief list of techniques that a hockey player can use to help gain a better perspective on things during their stressful moments.

When feeling anxious, stop what you are doing and try to do something relaxing. A person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do for a few minutes to get their mind off of the problem. A person could get some fresh air, listen to some music, or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things.

Remember that our fearful thoughts are exaggerated and can make the problem worse. A good way to manage your worry is to challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or anxious, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense.

When overwhelmed with worry, a person may encounter a lot of scary thoughts coming at them all at once. Instead of getting upset, remember that these thoughts are exaggerated and are not based on reality. From my interviews with various professionals, I've learned that usually it is the fear behind the thoughts that gets us worked up. Ignore the fear behind these thoughts and your worry should decrease.

Be smart in how you deal with your fears and anxieties. Do not try to tackle everything all at once. When facing a current or upcoming task that overwhelms you with a lot of anxiety, break the task into a series of smaller steps. Completing these smaller tasks one at a time will make the stress more manageable and increases your chances of success.

Remember that all the worrying in the world will not change anything. Most of what we worry about never comes true. Instead of worrying about something that probably won't happen, concentrate on what you are able to do.

In every anxiety-related situation you experience, begin to learn what works, what doesn't work, and what you need to improve on in managing your fears and anxieties. For instance, you have a lot of anxiety and you decide to take a walk before your next game to help you feel better. The next time you feel anxious you can remind yourself that you got through it the last time by taking a walk. This will give you the confidence to manage your anxiety the next time around.

It is not easy to deal with all of our fears and worries. When your fears and anxieties have the best of you, try to calm down and then get the facts of the situation. The key is to take it slow. All you can do is to do your best each day, hope for the best, and when something does happen, take it in stride. Take it one step at a time and things will work out.

#### **BIOGRAPHY:**

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods" - an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. For additional information go to: <http://www.managingfear.com/>