



Dealing with nerves or excitement before a game as an ice hockey goalie involves a combination of mental and physical strategies. Here are some techniques you might find helpful:

Mental Strategies:

1. **Visualization:** Spend some quiet time visualizing successful plays, saves, and your movements in the game. Imagine yourself reacting calmly and confidently to various scenarios.
2. **Positive Self-talk:** Remind yourself of your skills and previous successes. Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations.
3. **Breathing Exercises:** Practice deep breathing techniques to help calm your mind and reduce physical tension.
4. **Routine:** Develop a pre-game routine that includes activities that help you feel grounded and focused. This could involve listening to specific music, stretching, or going through specific drills.
5. **Focus on the Process:** Concentrate on what you can control, such as your preparation and effort, rather than the outcome of the game.

Physical Strategies:

1. **Warm-Up:** Ensure you have a thorough warm-up that gets your body ready for the game. This can include dynamic stretches, light cardio, and specific goalie drills.
2. **Nutrition and Hydration:** Eat a balanced meal and stay hydrated before the game. Avoid heavy or greasy foods that can make you feel sluggish.
3. **Equipment Check:** Double-check your gear to ensure everything is in place and comfortable. This can give you peace of mind and reduce distractions.

In-Game Strategies:

1. **Stay Present:** Focus on the current play rather than dwelling on past mistakes or worrying about future ones. Take it one save at a time.
2. **Communication:** Stay engaged by communicating with your teammates. This helps maintain focus and keeps you involved in the game.
3. **Reset Quickly:** If a goal is scored against you, have a quick mental and physical routine to reset your focus. This could be as simple as taking a deep breath and tapping the posts.

Experiment with these techniques and find what works best for you. Everyone is different, so it's important to tailor your approach to what makes you feel the most prepared and confident.