



KINESTHETIC MOTOR IMAGERY

Definition: Imagining the body sensations associated with movements.

Consistent practice of kinesthetic motor imagery:

- Improves body awareness and physiological readiness for movement
- Increases motivation for movement
- Promotes mindful and skillful movements

GUIDE

1) Choose your motor activity and setting

- Complex, whole body movements from your own motor repertoire
- Familiar settings (home, gym, park, neighborhood, etc.)

2) Tune into your body

- Deep breaths
- Body scan
- Alert relaxation

3) Begin the imagery exercise

- Minimize visualization and focus on the body sensations evoked by the movements
- For example, pay attention to the sensations of movements in joints, muscle contractions/stretching, speed and flow of movement, coordination of different body parts during movement, breathing, heartbeat, sweating, etc.
- Try to stay focused

4) Make it a vivid and embodied experience

- Immerse yourself in the imagery exercise
- Not thinking but doing

5) Pay attention to your feelings

- Form positive mental images
- Perfection is not the goal
- Frustration and sense of failure will not help
- Sense of ease and accomplishment will help

6) Close the loop

- Link your imagery practice to your actual movements
- For example, briefly practice imagery before starting to walk, exercising in the gym, etc.
- Be mindful of your movements and body sensations
- Incorporate your real experience into your imagery practice