

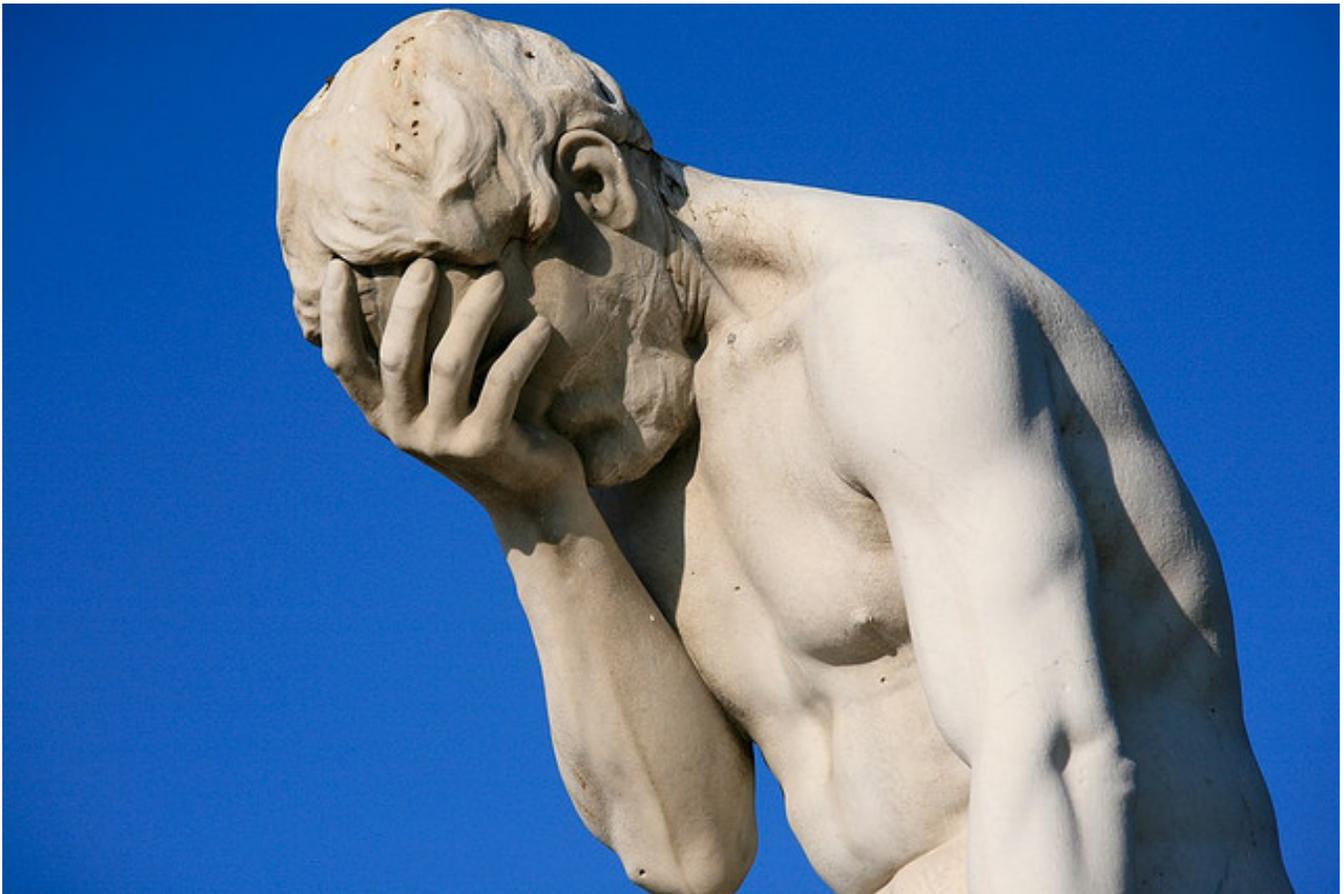


Randy's Attack System Wrestling

www.randyswrestlingsite.com

Email: Randy@randyswrestlingsite.com

Calming the Nerves



Do you feel like you're about to throw up?

You're not alone. Here's a recent quote: *My son gets so nervous that he throws up before every match. I know he could do so much better if he could just settle down and not get so nervous!*

I've seen this one issue drive some athletes **right out of the sport**. The nerves make them so miserable, they eventually quit wrestling.

I also struggled with the nerves in high school. How I wish I knew then what I am about to share with you now.

Let's start with this quick 4 step guide to calming your nerves:

1. Expect to get nervous before competition. This is your body's way of preparing for battle.

Example in point: every time I *didn't* get nervous before a match - I wrestled poorly.

Everyone gets nervous before they wrestle - but as is true with public speaking - others don't *appear* to be nervous to you. **But they are.** Watch a video of your wrestling sometime, especially if the footage captured showed you before the match started. Did you *look* nervous? Probably not as much as you *felt*.

2. Channel your nervous energy to win more matches. For reference, here's something that happened to me when I was in high school. I was wrestling the biggest match of my life (up to that point).

Huge 40+ team tournament - the biggest conference tournament in the country at that time (and possibly still is).

I was in the finals and seeded #2. The guy seeded ahead of me was someone I had beaten the previous year. *That somehow made it worse.*

I couldn't lose to him!

Anyway, I was so unglued that I was sobbing in the corner before the match! My assistant coach took me aside and - I'll never forget this - he *re-focused* me on the task at hand.

He *didn't* address how nervous I was, or how big a match this was. (I see a lot of coaches make this mistake, by the way, by telling their athletes things like "this is the Big One." Like the athlete doesn't already know it. Or the olde rah rah 'you can do it!' Or something like that, when all you're thinking about at the time is **throwing up**.)

Instead, my assistant coach laid out this gameplan:

*He is expecting you to grab his head, and he's prepared for it. **Stay off his head.** If you don't grab his head, he's not going to know what to do.*

You're better on your feet than he is.

Beat him on his feet and you win the match.

That was it. Just those couple of pointers.

I went out, got the only takedown in the match, and held on for dear life to win 4-3.

When you're faced with a similar situation, **lay out your game plan**. Focus on **that**, not how nervous you are or what you had for lunch that you're likely to see again here shortly.

3. Shut out negative thoughts, comments, etc. If your teammates/friends insist on telling you how good your next opponent is - shut that down Right Away. That negative energy **doesn't** help you prepare to wrestle your best.

4. Build your Pre-match routine that is *consistent* and allows YOU to wrestle your best. If you're not sure where to start, take a match that you wrestled your best, and build that mindset and preparation around it.

Now, let's move on to another topic that has emerged recently: *Expectations*.

In the above example, my *expectation* was that I should win the match because I had beaten him before (and, in all truth, I **was** a better wrestler than him). That made it difficult in some ways, because now, its *embarrassing* if I lose because I should *win*.

At least, that's the way I thought about it, and I'm guessing, the way a lot of you think about such situations as well.

The truth is, there are *never* any guarantees in *any* match. And putting more undue pressure on yourself because of such expectations just serves to *increase* your chances of losing. If your opponent is familiar to you, and you have won, then **you already have your blueprint** for success. Just as my coach already had the blueprint, he'd seen me beat this kid before, he knew what my strengths were, you should do the same.

And get the "what if I lose" negative energy out of your head.

Know what happens when you lose? You shake hands, they raise the other kid's hand - and you go on to wrestle a lot more matches. *Its not life or death* (although it may seem like it at the time).

Keeping it in this perspective can help take the pressure off you so you can have a better result.

Next situation is the opposite: You are facing an opponent who is *favored* to win. Maybe he's beaten you before. Maybe he's older, more mature, stronger track record, etc. Perhaps, you're not even sure if you can win, or you can't honestly tell yourself you think you're going to win, because you don't.

Let's take another trip to the past to my first collegiate tournament.

I was an unseeded freshman who had never won a college match before.

I managed to beat the #2 and #3 seeds in the quarters and semis.

Now I was in the finals against the #1 seed.

Collegiate All-American.

Senior.

Built like a brick wall.

There probably wasn't a single person in that gym that thought I could win. *Including me.*

Here's the approach I took: In my head, I just kept telling myself: *I'm going to get in his face and make him fight for every point.*

At some point in the match, after fighting off numerous attacks, I came to the realisation: *this guy can't take me down.* After I realised that, I just ramped up the pressure until I got my takedown.

I won by one point.

That tournament became special to me. In four years, I never lost a match there. I was the first 4x champ of that tournament.

It wouldn't have happened if I hadn't taken the unique mental approach that I did my freshman year.

Wrestling opponents that are “better than you” - or of higher status - is something to be *embraced*, not *feared*. Every time you wrestle someone who is ahead of you, and you battle them **hard**, you make yourself better.

In short, embrace the journey. Embrace the challenges of competing against tough wrestlers. Embrace the challenges of climbing the ladder in the sport. And embrace the experience! This is supposed to be fun, after all!

-Randy Simpson