



Self-confidence

“Some people get too nervous before an event,” says Crust. A popular relaxation technique is Progressive Muscle Relaxation, combined with deep breathing.

Do it: Sit comfortably with your eyes closed and sequentially tense then relax all the muscles working down from your head to your toes. Tense each group for 10 seconds, and then relax for 25 before moving on to the next set. Breathe in deeply as you tense then slowly breathe out, in and out again in the relaxation phase.

Commitment

“One of the best ways to combat apathy or keep going when boredom sets in on a long ride is to strengthen your commitment by goal setting.”

Do it: Performance goals need to be specific, measurable, challenging but attainable, time-based and written down. They need to be both short- and long-term, with some of the short-term goals stepping stones to long-term ones.

Challenge

“Replaying positive images and experiences in your mind before an event, or a feared descent, is a useful tool.”

Do it: Re-imagining and replaying the perfect sprint or cornering sequence will help boost confidence, block negative thoughts and even boost your body’s motor controls when you perform the task for real.

Control

“Self-talk is cues or phrases an athlete repeats to themselves to control their thoughts or actions.”

Do it: Use self-talk to boost motivation, with phrases such as “Keep pushing it!” or a cue to stay focused on a specific element, such as “smooth circles” to improve pedalling technique.