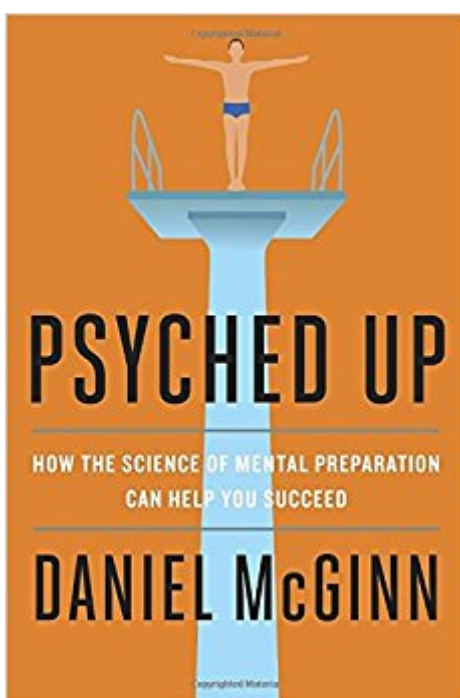


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# Psyched Up: How The Science Of Mental Preparation Can Help You Succeed



## Synopsis

Closing the sale. Asking for a raise. Nailing the big presentation. Of the 2,000 hours you work every year, your success or failure is determined in the couple of dozen crucial hours when you need to bring your absolute best. Will you? The last few minutes before a major challenge can be terrifying. Ever wished you knew how to make sure you ace the make-or-break test, audition, or interview? We often feel the most powerless just before we're expected to act powerful. As you'll learn in this life-changing book, practice might make perfect, but perfection is useless if you can't summon it when it counts. Pulling off a great speech or the pivotal at bat also requires the right kind of mental preparation. In *Psyched Up*, journalist Daniel McGinn dives into the latest psychological research and interviews athletes, soldiers, entertainers, and others who, despite years of practice and enviable track records, will ultimately be judged on their ability to deliver a solid performance when it's their turn to shine. For instance, he reveals...  
• How Jerry Seinfeld's jacket and Stephen Colbert's pen help them get laughs.  
• What General Stanley McChrystal said to Special Forces before they entered the battlefield.  
• Why the New England Patriots hired the DJ from the Red Sox to help them win. Among other counterintuitive insights, McGinn reveals why trying to calm your backstage jitters can be worse for your performance than channeling it into excitement; how meaningless rituals can do more to prepare you in the final moments than last-minute rehearsal; and how a prescription from your doctor could help you unleash your best skills. Whether you're a sportsperson or a salesperson, an actor or an entrepreneur, one bad hour can throw away months of hard work. There's so much conflicting popular advice that we often end up doing the wrong things. McGinn separates the facts from the old wives' tales and shares new, research-driven strategies for activating your talent, optimizing your emotions, and getting psyched up to take the spotlight.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Performance anxiety can scuttle great opportunities to showcase your talent and work. *Psyched Up* is an essential user’s guide for ensuring you’ll be your best when you take center stage—whether the cameras are rolling or not!” —KATIE COURIC  
“Daniel McGinn takes readers into locker rooms, backstage on Broadway, onto the sales floor at Yelp, and inside the DJ booth at Fenway Park to discover the secrets of how high performers use psychology, superstition, and a surprising mix of other tools to get ready for the make-or-break events in their lives. It’s a fascinating read.” —CHARLES DUHIGG, author of *The Power of Habit* and *Smarter Faster Better*  
“*Psyched Up* is filled with actionable, practical tips and tools to help reduce anxiety, lower stress, and build confidence. McGinn’s strategies can create a winning pregame routine for anyone.” —ARIANNA HUFFINGTON  
“This book is a gift for entrepreneurs or anyone else who pitches ideas for a living.” —BRAD FELD, venture capitalist and cofounder of Techstars  
“*Psyched Up* provides a wonderful overview of the science and practicalities of how to perform well when it matters most. The book is full of useful takeaways for all of us, including my favorite—how powerful it can be to have lucky exam shoes.” —GRETCHEN REYNOLDS, New York Times fitness columnist and author of *The First 20 Minutes*  
“A wonderful pleasure to read, *Psyched Up* is an expertly crafted investigation into the vibrating heart of peak performance.” —PO BRONSON, author of *Top Dog* and *NurtureShock*  
“I can’t think of another book that’s as helpful as this, whether you’re shooting a free throw, taking a big test, giving a toast, or on one knee proposing. Read *Psyched Up* before your next big moment.” —MATT MULLENWEG, creator of WordPress and CEO of Automattic  
“*Psyched Up* offers compelling, entertaining, and well-researched advice on how to prepare for stressful situations.” —TONY HSIEH, CEO of Zappos.com and author of *Delivering Happiness*  
“Daniel McGinn’s *Psyched Up* offers that perfect combination of informative, applicable advice and page-turningly good entertainment.” —KEITH FERRAZZI, author of *Who’s Got Your Back* and *Never Eat Alone*

DANIEL MCGINN is an editor at Harvard Business Review. His writing has appeared in *Wired*, *Inc.*, the *Boston Globe Magazine*, and *Newsweek*. He lives in suburban Boston with his family.

Psyched Up inspires readers to rethink how they mentally prepare for the crucial moments in their lives. Packed with insightful stories and research, the author shows readers a variety of techniques to help them succeed. Readers choose the methods that are most meaningful to them. I've immensely benefited from this book. I now have a "Psyched Up" routine that includes reliving past successes that I'm especially proud of and having a handful of mementos close by (family picture taken during a great time, ticket from favorite concert, a "lucky" bracelet). These efforts plus taking the time to acknowledge the importance of being mentally psyched up now help me to be more confident and enthusiastic. An additional shout out on the writing style which is conversational, economical, and very engaging.

This is a tremendously practical, enjoyable, and entertaining read. It's well researched and I specifically appreciated the fun selection of athletic and business anecdotes used to illustrate how to carefully calibrate the state of one's mind so as to maximize performance. I got a lot out of this read, so much so that as college track coach I've decided to assign it over the summer to several of our athletes who I think could particularly benefit from the tips and tools laid out by McGinn.

This book is a great read, for anyone who faces some sort of challenge in their life where any sort of mental preparation is required. The book strikes a perfect balance between information and entertainment. Dan rolls in stories and personal anecdotes that further the depth of understanding of the concepts of prepping yourself. When you read it, it almost feels like a novel, but you soon realize that Dan is teaching you methods that you can actually employ in your own life. Well written and a page turner, you'll find yourself anxiously waiting to read the next chapter. This book is well researched, with a diverse set of examples, from surgeons, to TV personalities to executives to high school athletes. There's something for everyone, but the research and the stories will keep you engaged. I can't wait for his next book.

Daniel McGinn provides an outstanding combination of research and real-life implementation of methods to prepare to attack any high-stakes situation. Psyched Up includes examples from the medical field to the athletic arena, even including examples from comedians. Being a voracious reader, I rank this book at the top of my list of concepts that allow for implementation immediately. The notes in this work are extensive, allowing for the reader to connect with the research. Now that

you are "Psyched Up" go out and COMPETE!!

What a fascinating read! McGinn not only reveals the often surprising and useful techniques top performers use to operate at peak efficiency, he does so with engaging prose -- and the kind of stories that make this book really hard to put down. Clearly he took his own advice when he wrote it because he's operating at the peak of his craft.

I am giving this book the highest rating because it adeptly synthesizes a vast amount of knowledge that the reader can actually use. McGinn achieves this goal with clear, inviting, and at times quite funny, prose. The bottom line is that this book offers non gimmicky strategies for life improvement.

I read 2 to 3 books like this a month not only for my own personal growth but for all of the people in our company. We are a sales organization. The great thing about this book is its simplicity. There is no mumbo-jumbo or intricate theories or complicated formulas. Each topic is presented with great examples that ordinary people... nonathletes can appreciate and emulate. Every sales manager should buy one for their staff, make them read it and apply it to what they do. Well done!

I grabbed this book after seeing several recommendations on social media. It was informative and well balanced with scientific and personal anecdotes that kept me interested. The author does a nice job of taking a topic you think you know something about and teaching you a thing or two. Two signs that this was a good choice for me to read (and for others): finished it fast and had a bunch of dog eared pages of things I wanted to remember for myself and to share with others both in my family and at work.

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