

DISTANCE

Zoom out and see your value objectively

THE SITUATION

You're about to perform: a negotiation, a presentation to senior management or a decision with a lot at stake. You get far too close to yourself and become your own harshest critic.

THE KEY INSIGHT

When you look at yourself from the outside, stress drops and clarity returns.

Research on self-distancing shows that when you prepare in the third person, you get lower stress, better performance and less rumination afterwards. It also becomes easier to see your own value, instead of being your own harshest critic.

DO IT

Write your intro in the third person

"[Your name] has ...": three short sentences about your experience, your choices and your skills. Then say it in the first person.

Shift your focus to what you can control

In your control: preparation, routines, focus, what you communicate and how. **Not in your control:** the other people, the chemistry, the decision.

Shift perspective

When you prepare in the third person, you force yourself to look at the situation objectively, from the outside. You step out of the emotions and into the overview.

COMMIT · YOUR PLAN

Choose one technique, and use it within the next 48 hours.

If

then

1 · TEST

Use the technique in a real situation.

2 · REFLECT

What worked? What did you notice?

3 · ADJUST

Adapt it, and test again.

Repetition is what turns it into a habit.

Source: Kross et al. (2014), Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.