**PT Tips: Breathing, Mindfulness and Relaxation January 6, 2021**

**Benefit of a Practice:**

Better oxygenation of all tissues

Opportunity to improve posture in a simple manner

Quieting the mind to open up more “real estate” in the brain for positive movement patterns and clearer thinking, i.e. stress reduction

Carries over to improve other automatic body functions-heart rate, blood pressure, gut function, pelvic floor control to improve incontinence

Sets stage for improved joint mobility-relaxed muscles allow joints to move more freely with less pain

Meditation does not necessarily mean having no thoughts whatsoever. It can be primarily a detachment from focusing on a specific thought. It can be an awareness of only one body part and allowing relaxation of one muscle group. It can be breathing in and out slowly 3 times.

Different techniques work differently for different people. Some people do best with a spiritual component. Other people do best with a physical action. It can be accomplished with mindful walking or a movement practice like Tai Chi or yoga. It can be a different technique for different circumstances or time of day

There are many other apps to explore with a simple google search. I suggest you start very small at first if you don’t already have a meditation practice. It may even be taking one mindful breath before each meal. If you are a beginner, I would not set a goal of greater that 3 minutes. Setting a timer can help because then you don’t have to be distracted by the thoughts like “I wonder if this is long enough”, “I wonder if it’s about over”, “Am I doing this correctly?”.

**Meditation Resources on the web:**

Insight Timer-70,00 free meditations. Wide variety of styles, topics and durations. They have a premium subscription at a cost but the free options are great and can suit anyone’s style

Headspace-1 or 2 free week trials with $5.80/mo. Subscription of $70/year

Calm- 1 week free then $70/year subscription

10% Happier-free trial then $100 for 1 year or 4 months for $50

\*\*Congratulate\*\* yourself and celebrate when you incorporate any technique in order to reinforce the practice of meditating/mindfulness!

**Today’s Practice:** Body scan