

PR **ACT**ICAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR NEW PARENTS

T ECHNIQUE

EX: BREATHING

Technique is my way of differentiating between moving, and moving with purpose. It's not just about moving. It's about *how* you are moving. I've worked with many moms who are struggling because they jumped into programs that weren't appropriate for their new body. I say new body because a woman's body goes through more changes during pregnancy than a man's does in his whole lifetime. Yeah, let's let that sink in for a minute.

To accommodate pregnancy our bodies go through extreme shifts on every level. Delivering our babies is another tremendous stress that forces yet more changes to our muscles, ligaments, organs, psyche. So to assume that your body can do the same things it did before and try to just go back into your pre-pregnancy workouts can have disastrous consequences.

This is why I don't like the phrase "getting your body back" after pregnancy. You can't get it back. Just like you can't go back to high school and stop yourself from dating that jerk. We have enough unrealistic expectations of ourselves, this shouldn't be one of them.

Instead of chasing an old version of yourself, surrender to the potential of your new body. You get to decide how you want your new (and magical) body to feel. Do you want more strength, flexibility, stability, stamina. You can work towards any of those goals but make sure you are building your dream bod on a strong foundation using effective and sustainable techniques.

Now there are tons of examples of daily movements in parenting that could be done with better technique: picking up your child, handling getting them in and out of the carseat, moving a sleeping child into their crib, changing their diaper while they're trying to roll off the changing table... I mean the list goes on and on.

Now all of these movements are generally dictated by survival mode = don't wake the sleeping baby = hold your breath while holding them just right (even if that means your arm is falling asleep), channel your inner ninja while climbing the stairs, and then fold yourself over the crib to avoid dropping them onto their mattress. Yup. Sound familiar?

So each moment of that scenario could be analyzed and improved upon using better technique, in most cases, without even waking your child ;) But for our purposes we're just going to take a look at that whole "holding your breath" part because breathing is kind of a necessity for YOUR survival.

EXERCISE:

Stop whatever you're doing and notice how you're breathing.

Is it barely noticeable? Is it shallow? Is your jaw locked? Is your chest or stomach moving at all? Okay so let's get some airflow going!

First do a quick shimmy. Yeah, shake it all out, just like the hokey-pokey.

Okay now, inhale through your nose, exhale through your nose.

Now inhale and really try to fill up your lungs instead of your belly (ie. expand your ribcage all directions)

Now exhale with a big open mouth sigh.

Okay now inhale through your nose, nice and big again...

Notice how your body lifts up when you inhale like that?

Okay, exhale.

Now this time inhale nice and big again...

This time, exhale through your mouth (like you're blowing out birthday candles) and try not to lose that lift when you exhale - use your stomach muscles to force the air out - it should feel like a girdle just cinched around your midsection.

Okay relax your shoulders. Yeah, whenever we think "lift", those shoulders just love to get involved.

One more time - nice big inhale

Exhale, blow out those birthday candles, use your stomach muscles to force the air out and relax your shoulders.

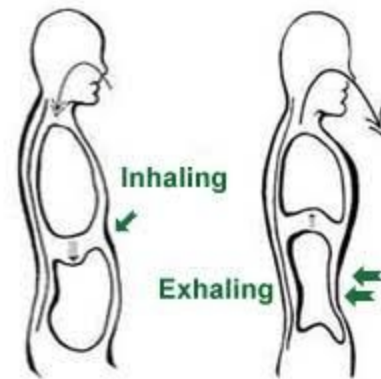
Okay I lied, one more time. Bonus round.

Nice full 3 dimensional inhale into your ribcage

Exhale using your stomach muscles, lift up with your pelvic floor, and release your shoulders.

How did it feel?

Confusing? Exhilarating? Maybe both?



There are a lot of ways to breathe and different scenarios where certain breathing patterns are most helpful. The foundation of great technique for movement starts at your breath. Is your breath helping you or hurting you? Is it causing more tension, limiting your oxygen flow, limiting your energy? Try breathing bigger and with more

connection to your core throughout the day. You'll notice immediately how good it feels to actually get some oxygen flowing through your body and how strong you feel when you ask your muscles to do what they're designed to do!

**THIS IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF HOW IMPORTANT TECHNIQUE IS WHEN YOU
ARE REBUILDING YOUR FOUNDATION.**

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE MORE DIRECTION,
PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL ROBIN@BREATHEFITLIFE.COM
TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT!**