

## ***25, 35, 45 – Muscles & Fitness - Being Pro Active with Muscle Aches & Pains***

I have been training in the gym 3 to 4 days a week for the about 17 years and competing for 15. If there is one thing I have learned its being proactive with muscle aches, pains and preemptive maintenance. Be proactive and you can eliminate the majority of, if not all, your injuries.

Research has proven that stress, anger and anxiety, when triggered in an athlete, can tighten muscles, tense up the body, hamper and negatively affect breathing, and generally act as a hindrance to performance. This result is no different if you are 25, 35 or 45!

In short, many athletes don't reach their performance potential because of thinking too much and improper breathing.

For 10 months I have been lucky enough to be working with one of the most respected sports psychologist and mental performance experts in the world. On Saturday morning May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012 I acted as kind of bio-neuro feedback test subject to show how our thoughts translate instantly into emotions, and emotions into physiological responses.

That day the team from the mental performance training center gave a demonstration of the biofeedback/neurofeedback techniques used to train athletes in things like mental toughness and proper breathing and I was the test subject.

Hooked up to sophisticated transmitters that registered a number of indicators on a screen, I was questioned by a relaxation and stress management consultant. The questions evoked reactions in my mind and body. Graphs on a screen would rise and fall as I got my thoughts under control by moderating my breathing and relaxing my mind.

One basic concept is that when tension builds up in the upper body and shoulders it makes it very difficult to breathe properly from the diaphragm. Tension in the shoulders slows an athlete down.

The question is; why does tension build up in the shoulders?

There are a number of reasons this can happen:

1. Previous injuries
2. Worrying about the expectations of a coach
3. Worrying about the expectation of a parent
4. Fear of failing

This can all lead to a "busy brain", or thinking too much.

While a busy mind might be good for multi-tasking activities, it's not good for sports or activities that require focus. In high focus sports a busy mind is the last thing you want.

I can honestly say that the techniques I learned from my mental performance coach, have helped me calm down, breath better, and conserve more energy. In an endurance sport like weightlifting, such skills are indispensable. I also sleep much better now that I have more control over my thoughts.

The mental and breathing aspects of sports and non-sports activities are key in elite performance. Learn to respect and use them to setup your game.

I should mention that I used this training and testing as part of my training for my Guinness World Record for the most squat-lifted weight in one hour, hoisting 127,000 pounds.

To find more information on Walter Urban and his World and National records please visit [www.walterurban.com](http://www.walterurban.com)