

Managing Emotions During BOC Prep...and LIFE

2025 ATSNJ Student Conference
Student Session #2

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Disclosures

Neither presenter has any financial disclosures in association with this presentation

Both presenters are current members of the ATSNJ
ATs CARE Committee

Meet Your Presenters



Betsy Esposito *Exercise Science Lecturer, Kean University*

Betsy Esposito is a lecturer at Kean University for the BS in Exercise Science program, as well as their Internship Coordinator. She worked as an athletic trainer in the college setting at Florida Gulf Coast University and Saint Peter's College, for most of her career and then tested out the secondary school, industrial and hospital settings. She worked per diem for many years covering youth and club sports. She graduated from Kean University with a bachelor's in athletic training in 2004 and got her master's in healthcare administration from Florida Gulf Coast University in 2006. She is currently the chair of ATs Care NJ and has spent time as secretary of ATSNJ and on the NATA District 2 Help Network Committee. She also became a registered yoga teacher through Kean University in 2021.



Luis Torres

Assistant Professor of Kinesiology, Montclair State University

Luis Torres has created a career as an athletic trainer and professor of athletic training. He has been a professor at Montclair State University, New Jersey City University and East Stroudsburg University. He also has spent his time working with the Hospital of Special Surgery working as a Sports Safety Program Educator. He also has spent time as a per diem and outreach athletic trainer. He has various publications highlighting his research across many scopes of athletic training.

Presentation Outline

- Discuss anatomy relevant in emotional regulation
- Discuss the evidence behind the emotional regulation strategies we will practice today
- Learn and practice breathing strategies
- Learn and practice positive self-talk strategies
- Learn and practice imagery strategies
- Learn and practice mindfulness and relaxation movement strategies
- How does this all help with your BOC prep, career, and life?

What do you need to become certified athletic trainer?



Autonomic Nervous System

Sympathetic response

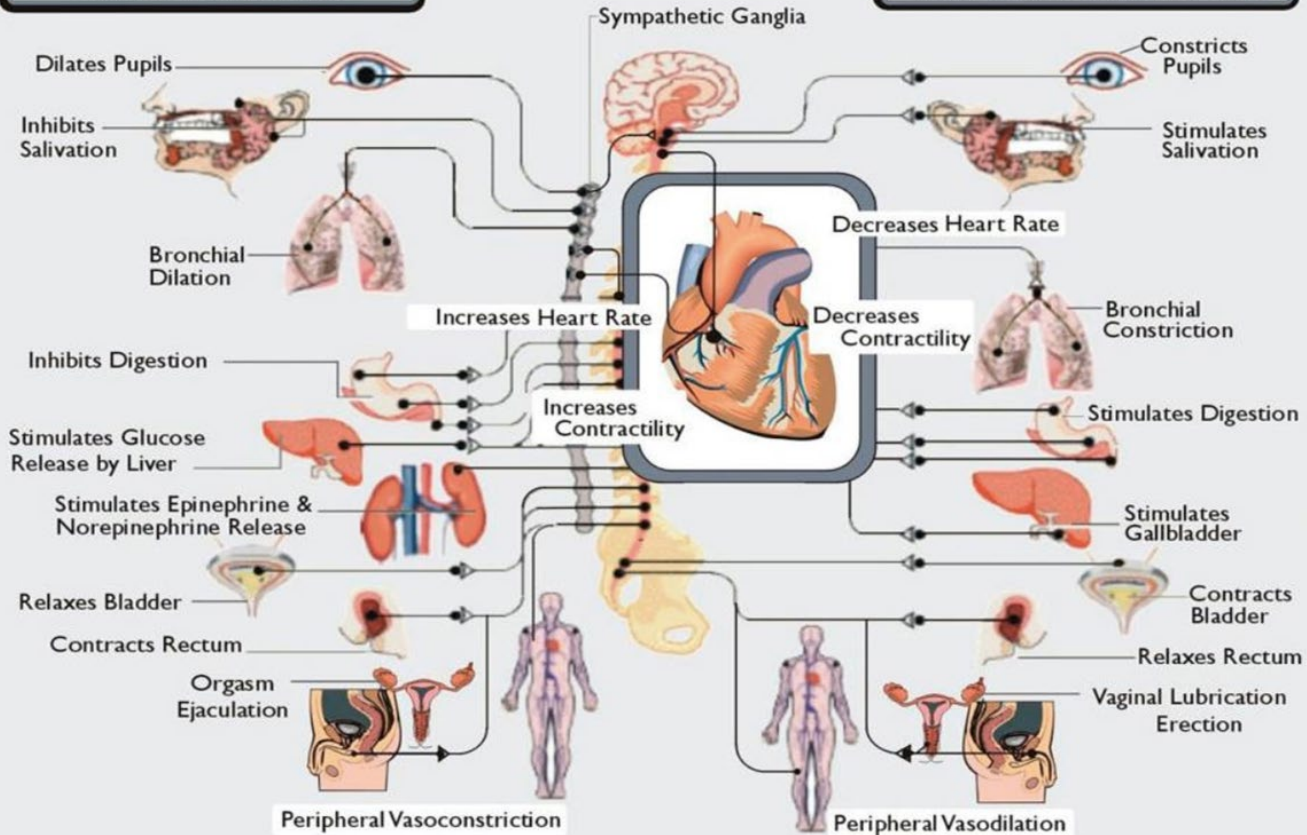


Parasympathetic response



SYMPATHETIC

PARASYMPATHETIC



Does Research Support These Strategies?

- **Breathing**

- Breathing exercises reduce chronic, nonspecific low back pain (Anderson & Bliven, 2017)
- Has been shown to reduce aggressive behavior in males (Gaines & Barry, 2008)
- Online, mindful breathing at 5 days per week for 4 weeks often used as intervention of choice in research

- **Positive Self-Talk**

- PST produced greater vertical jump performances than negative NST (Javier & Rafael, 2024)
- PST improved vertical jump and deadlift performances in 150 CrossFIT athletes (Horecajo et al., 2019)

- **Imagery**

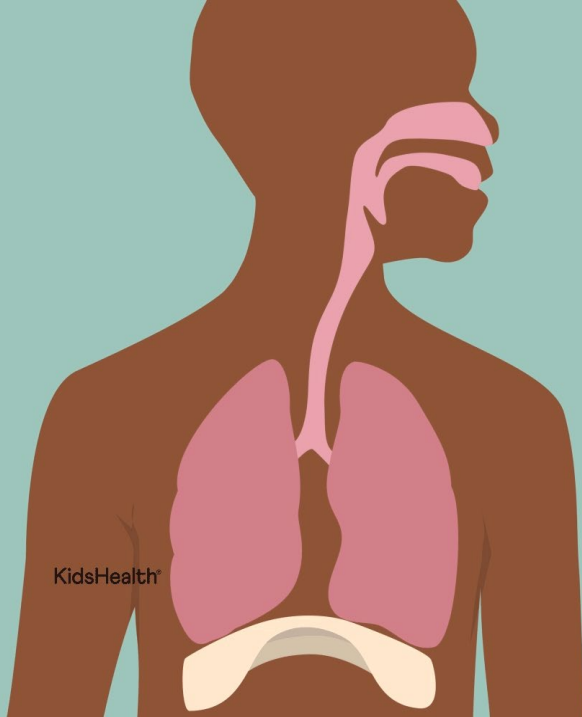
- Imagery led to greater knee strength, less pain, and reduced knee laxity in patients after ACLR, enhanced wrist range of motion after forearm immobilization, and better muscular endurance after ankle sprains (Baez & Jochimsen, 2023)

- **Mindfulness and relaxation training**

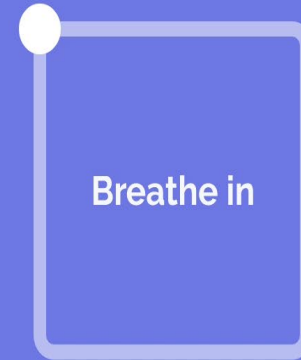
- Mindfulness has been helpful in reducing pain and injury-related fear in athletes with patellofemoral pain syndrome (Bagheri et al., 2021)

Breathing Techniques

Equal parts breathing



Box breathing



Positive Self-Talk and Imagery

Positive self-talk is a combination of affirmations, cue words, or mantras that individuals say to themselves internally or out loud.¹

Imagery refers to the internal representations generated by an individual that allow for perception without sensory input.¹

Mindful and Relaxing Movements

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Decreased anxiety in nursing students

(Toqan et al., 2022)

Exercise improves attention, processing, speed, memory and cognitive flexibility

(Haverkamp et al., 2020)



Yoga style movements

- Decreased anxiety and cortisol levels in college students

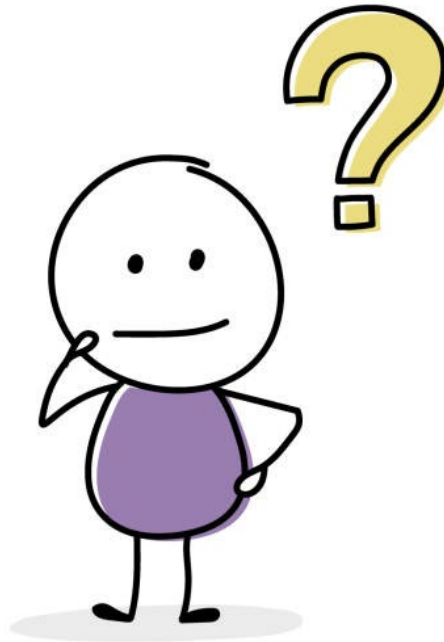
(Rishi et al., 2023)



The ATs Care program is designed to offer crisis management training opportunities for athletic trainers dealing with the aftermath of a critical incident.



QUESTIONS???



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