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COVID & THE FUTURE



December 2020



COVID AND THE FUTURE

I start this letter with Thanksgiving just around the corner, Christmas the next corner and then we say goodbye to another year. I have been in business for 25 years as of December, and can honestly say I have not encountered a year like this one. Starting a new business and all the stresses associated, Y2K, 9/11, building a new building, 2006-10 recession, and adding and losing staff have all had their moments of concern but 2020 has been more than any crystal ball could have foreseen.

The first 2.5 months of this year started better than any year previous, such optimism was at hand. Then the 3rd week in March hit and life as we have known it came to a halt. Full Potential slowed to a crawl but we kept the ball moving, treating those patients whose loss of therapy would have significant consequences in their recovery especially if they were a post-surgical patient.

It has been a sobering check to our reality that we, as a society and us in small business, could lose so much in so short of a time. And now, we get to walk on thin ice as we attempt to operate with so many regulations and the ever-present virus waiting if we let our guard down. No doubt, many of us have a lot to confront to keep it all moving forward, but confront we must lest we lose our momentum and become an indirect casualty of Covid. It would be interesting to differentiate the loss of life directly from Covid compared

to the loss of life, jobs, and businesses indirectly from Covid's effect on our country. It has been asked before, and certainly could be now, "Is the cure worse than the disease?" I suppose that answer would be individual for each of us depending on our susceptibility, but certainly much is being indirectly lost with no real way to total the full cost.

Sometimes it is good to look back to see what we have overcome so it is easier to look forward to the future that has so many question marks. We as a country have always valued freedom, it has been the common denominator in many (not all) of our conflicts. We have faced two world wars with such cruelty that one would have to wonder how anyone could come back home and be able to create a new life but many men and women did, I know my dad did.

He overcame his farm life education, got his GED after the war, his BS in chemistry and finally his medical doctor degree years later. It was a long road, and one may ask, "why did he succeed?" He succeeded like many others before him and after have succeeded. He had a goal, he kept his eye on his target, and he was willing to put in the work. He practiced for nearly 40 years. He was part of what has been called, The Greatest Generation.

(Continued inside)

Looking back, we can take solace in knowing how many have overcome so much. There have been many other wars, economic depression/recessions and civil unrest that were all hills to climb during and after, which have asked much of the women and men of this country. It is a validation to the resiliency of Americans to rise up and confront what is stopping us.

Today, we stand on a staircase of innumerable steps, we have climbed many already and for some of us we thought we were getting close to the landing. Covid has put a barrier of ill-defined magnitude between us and life. It manages to step in our way in the most innocent of circumstances and in the most complex of problems. Life as we knew it is hard to recognize with our masks, barriers, distancing and the fear that seems to underlie it all. With the onset of the fall flu season, it has become a sobering realization that we too are once again in a war with a microbe who attacks on many fronts – health, business, social, political, religious and educational to name a few. Every major institution is trying to find a way to surmount the obstacles this threat has created. And the oddity of it is, how do you fight an enemy with no form and who survives by using us as hosts whereby we each become an enemy to the other? The strategy we are given is to distance, cover and spray, do not play and just stay away. A hard sentence to follow – at least indefinitely. And that is the problem, it is an indefinite sentence and we don't really get out for good behavior.

There are no easy answers here, and it seems they all have compromise written all over them. Live and risk exposure or hide and risk missing life. There has to be a point, a place in one's mind where we draw the line and say, this is how I shall live with our new invisible terrorist. Such a decision is obviously individual, each choosing what is right for them. Back in the day, WWII to be exact, there was the Axis Powers attempting to pound communism into the heart of humanity, and the Allied powers fighting

for freedom. All I can say about this is we have to rise above it, fear will never take us to our destination, unless it is your basement. Fear would never handle communism or who tried to push it into our world. Fear will never handle Covid.

Maybe it works like it worked for my dad - have a goal, keep your eye on it despite all the distractions, and be willing to work for it. Keep moving forward despite the resistance, be smart about the rules of infection but don't stop living. Pursue your goals and keep building your life. A life with a high goal and high purpose tends to recruit the necessary resources within and without to get there. A life with no goals is a sitting duck for problems. Some of you have body problems, pain, limited movement and function. It affects you moving forward and reaching your goals, it keeps you from living. Fear can make us even more immobile, stressed and in pain. Last spring, Covid restrictions put us in a subsistence state where waiting for life to change became the mode of living. We could easily be approaching another lockdown, where life can be put on hold again.

We are here to help you stay in action, put more life into your living and help you continue to move forward despite all the reasons to stop and wait. Our clinic offers private treatment rooms, full sanitizing between treatments, and a high vigilance to keep our environment safe. By you doing the same we can help you keep moving forward.

Call today, we have free screens where you have the attention of a physical therapist for 30 minutes to answer questions and for them to do an exam to understand if PT can help you.

Be smart but don't be stopped.

To being in action.

Vincent Hanneken, PT

Healthy Recipe

NO-BAKE CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT BALLS



INGREDIENTS

- 10 tbsp cocoa powder
- 6 tbsp maple syrup
- 1/4 cup almond butter (use sunbutter for nut free)
- 1/4 cup unflavored pea protein powder (optional)
- 1/2 tsp peppermint extract
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 2-4 tbsp crushed candy canes
- 2-4 tbsp dairy free chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

Put everything except the candy cane or cacao nibs, chocolate chips and water into a bowl and mix well. Slowly add water if needed (You may not need any water if your almond butter is runny). Start with a teaspoon and slowly add until you get a well mixed batter. If you add too much then the batter will be too soft to roll. Add the candy canes/cacao nibs and chocolate chips and mix again. Allow to chill in the fridge while you clean up, then roll into balls.

BUILD - A - BAG

Interested in building a bag for a child entering the foster care system?
Here are some examples of what is needed most to help their transition.

BABIES

Sizes newborn to 3T

Pjs or sleepers

Socks

Blanket

Bottle - for sizes 12 mths

and smaller

Baby wash

KIDS

sizes 4T to 10

Pjs

socks

underwear

Stuffed animal

kids toothbrush & paste

Tear-free body wash

SIZE 12 AND UP

kid sizes 12 to Adult XL

Pjs

Socks

Underwear

Blanket/throws

toothbrush & paste

deodorant

Body wash



We kindly request all items be new.

Hope Pkgs is a 501c3 & will happily issue a receipt for any gifts.

Thank You!!!

Hope Pkgs helps kids that are going into foster care. Usually, there is not time for the children to pack a bag, so Hope Pkgs is having people "build" an overnight bag for those children. If you are interested in helping these foster children move into their foster home more comfortably, please donate! If you could pack all the items into a small backpack for the children to use, that would be much appreciated! Drop donations off at our office: 286 Hoover Blvd., Holland, MI 49423. For more information on Hope Pkgs, go to their website: Hopepkgs.org

You Help Us, Help Others!

Who Do You Know That Needs Our Help?



Full Potential
PHYSICAL THERAPY

286 Hoover Blvd • Holland, MI 49423

Phone: 616.392.2172 | Fax: 616.392.1726

tessa@fullpotentialpt.com | fullpotentialpt.com

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SOME THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SHOVELING SNOW

This article was in last year's winter's newsletter but as I was driving into work today, white flakes were dropping and reminding me of what is ahead. so it bears repeating. The school of hard knocks is always enrolling new students and working smarter not harder is the way to avoid those tough lessons.

1. Know your ability. First and foremost, each of you are different so know your body and what problems you have had. Someone who is 55 years old has much more to consider that someone who is 24 when they are going to go out and shovel the drive. Someone with a history of back pain, disc problems, etc. needs to approach the shoveling with a little more smarts. The old axiom "strain the brain and not the back" gets more relevant as we get older. So, if you are older or have a history of back, neck or shoulder problems, do some of your exercises first. You know, those one's stuck in the drawer we gave you in PT. But seriously, loosen up a bit.

2. Know your snow. Some snow is very dense and heavy. So, it is much harder to move. If that is the case, much better to shovel twice with half the weight and strain. If you have a lot of snow on the drive or walk, it is much easier to push snow a shorter distance. So, shovel the width and not the length. Sometimes with a driveway, one might have to split it in halves and go left and right with half the snow or even a 1/4 of the distance at a time. The body is much better at handling lighter more repetitive loads v. heavy less repetitive. The heavier the snow the more you should consider this principle. This is all common sense but keeping the lighter and more repetitive concept in mind has saved me a few times.

3. Pushing snow is much easier than lifting and throwing. When pushing snow, one can engage your core rather easily if you have been trained on this. (if not, this is a good skill to learn, we do that). Keep your abs tight as you push so the loads stay balanced and do not concentrate on your lower back. If you have to lift snow and throw it, try to throw it straight ahead and not twist. If you have to turn and throw it, move your feet to change directions and not twist your back. If you have to pick up snow or the pushing get hard, exhale as you do so. Really helpful. Why? Because it recruits your abdominals and they protect your back. Weight lifters do this, snow is weight and the same principle applies. I always tell my patients, "ex with ex", exhale with exertion. Practice exhaling as you exert and your body will eventually automate and do it without you having to remember. What is that called - a good ergonomic skill that serves to balance the stresses away the lower back.

4. Watch for unsmooth surfaces. As your pushing snow, be careful you do not catch a rise in the concrete and strain your shoulder or back. Those

uneven expansion joints can be murder on a back or shoulder. Typically, if your right handed, your right hand will be on the handle and that sudden force jamming into your right shoulder is the stuff a strain is made, or even worse a bicep tendon tear.

5. And speaking of tears. Many rotator cuff tears occur when someone falls. So, make sure your foot ware has good grip to it when out on slick surfaces. If your heading to work and need to shovel first, shoveling snow with leather soled shoes is asking for trouble as far as slipping and landing hard.

6. Don't let it freeze. It is a lot easier to shovel snow before someone has walked or driven on it causing it to freeze and stick to the surface.

7. Take a break if there is a lot to do. That snow is not going anywhere, muscles get tired. And when they get tired no one is home to protect the joints. Muscle serves to not only move objects but it protects our joints as well and fatigue sets us up for tightness, possible strain and joint stress. A simple rest break can be all you need. After you finish shoveling, you're a dozen times better off doing a few stretches for your hips and back before sitting down to relax which will just allow the muscles to stiffen up further (don't know how to do that, we can teach you). Muscles recover much better with a few light stretches after doing something like shoveling where the stresses land heavy on the back mostly due to number 8 just below.

8. Weight x Distance. Avoid the heavy shovels. Metal shovels last longer but can be much heavier and combined with the weight of the snow make for a heavy strain. A light, quality plastic shovel will last at least few years and help your back do the same. Remember if your lifting 10 lbs. of snow with a 4-foot long handled shovel, that is 40 lbs. of stress to your back, neck or shoulders. If it is the really wet kind of snow, that weight adds up fast. Divide or reduce the load and conquer. "Strain the brain not the back." Yes, I know, I am like a broken record but saving yourself from a strain is 3/4 mental.

9. Almost last but not least. A snowblower may be what you need with a large area or if you are getting to a point where manually doing this just does not make sense anymore due to the possibility for injury or other health concerns.

10. We are your friendly neighborhood PT clinic. If your heading into snow season and your back, shoulders or neck are already not doing well then consider getting a consult to see if we can help you. Don't add insult to injury, that is not using your brain!

**All our best for a smooth snow season,
The Full Potential staff.**

We Make It Easy To Leave A Review!

1. Use the camera app on your phone to scan the QR code on the right.
2. This will take you directly to our Google Reviews page.
3. Let us know how we did and tell us your story!



EXERCISE ESSENTIALS:

Try these simple exercises to help ease arthritis pain



KNEE EXTENSION STRETCH

While sitting, tighten your top thigh muscle to press the back of your knee downward towards the ground. Hold for 20 seconds and repeat 5 times.



HIP HIKES

While standing up on a step, lower one leg downward towards the floor by tilting your pelvis to the side. Then return the pelvis/leg back to a leveled position. Repeat 10 times on each leg.



Always consult your physical therapist or physician before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.

Patient Success Story!



"I am back to my normal activities!"

"I can walk without a walker and I can go for long walks! I am finally able to get into bed without any help and I am back to my normal activities. The staff there are super kind and helpful!" —**Amanda J.**



"I wouldn't go anywhere else!"

"I can now do most of everything I used to before my surgery. Mari did a great job in getting my neck back in shape after having a neck brace for 3 1/2 months. I feel like I should be able to drive really soon! The clinic's strength is that you do a very good job at helping people get better! I wouldn't go anywhere else, you are like family to me!" — **Linda F.**