Enhancing the Mind-Body Connection: Body Scans

Listening to and looking after your body is an important part of being an athlete. A useful psychological tool that can complement a prehab or morning routine is the “body scan”.

***What is a body scan?***

Body scans are a way to check in with yourself and increase awareness of your body. They can last anywhere between 30 seconds and 30 minutes.

***Why are body scans important?***

By tuning into your body, you might be able to notice any areas that feel tight, painful or different than usual. Relaying this information to your coach can help with injury prevention. Body scans are also a mindfulness exercise – these can help with relaxation.

***How do you do a body scan?***

Find a comfortable position. Take an easy deep breath in and out. Close your eyes if you’d like to.

1. Start by asking the question: “If my body could talk, what would it say?”. This can be a general feeling or something specific to one muscle group. (Feel free to use the word inventory at the bottom of the page if you’re stuck).
2. Turn your attention to your toes and feet then work your way up, noticing any feelings or sensations in your body. Take a moment to sit with any area that is uncomfortable or sore and try to let any tension go as you breathe out.
3. Visualise your body in different sections as demonstrated in the image above (e.g. upper body and lower body, front and back, left hand side and right hand side). Notice any balances or imbalances.

Word inventory:

Calm, tired, awake, painful, twisted, still, tense, relaxed, hot, heavy, tight, flowy, restless, cold, strong, irritated, prickly, numb, at ease, electric, weak, supported