



Myths and Tips for Exercising your Recovery

You probably already know that alcohol and drug abuse changes brain chemistry overtime, which affects judgment, memory, emotional states and perception and that these side effects last long after the individual has stopped using the above substances.

Although people tend to think of exercise as just good for the body, did you know it also benefits the brain, as it produces the creation of new neurons? Exercise increases oxygen in the brain by opening new pathways internally, and promotes the formation of blood vessels in the brain, builds connections between cells, enhances repair of neural tissue, and generates new neurons in memory formation areas!

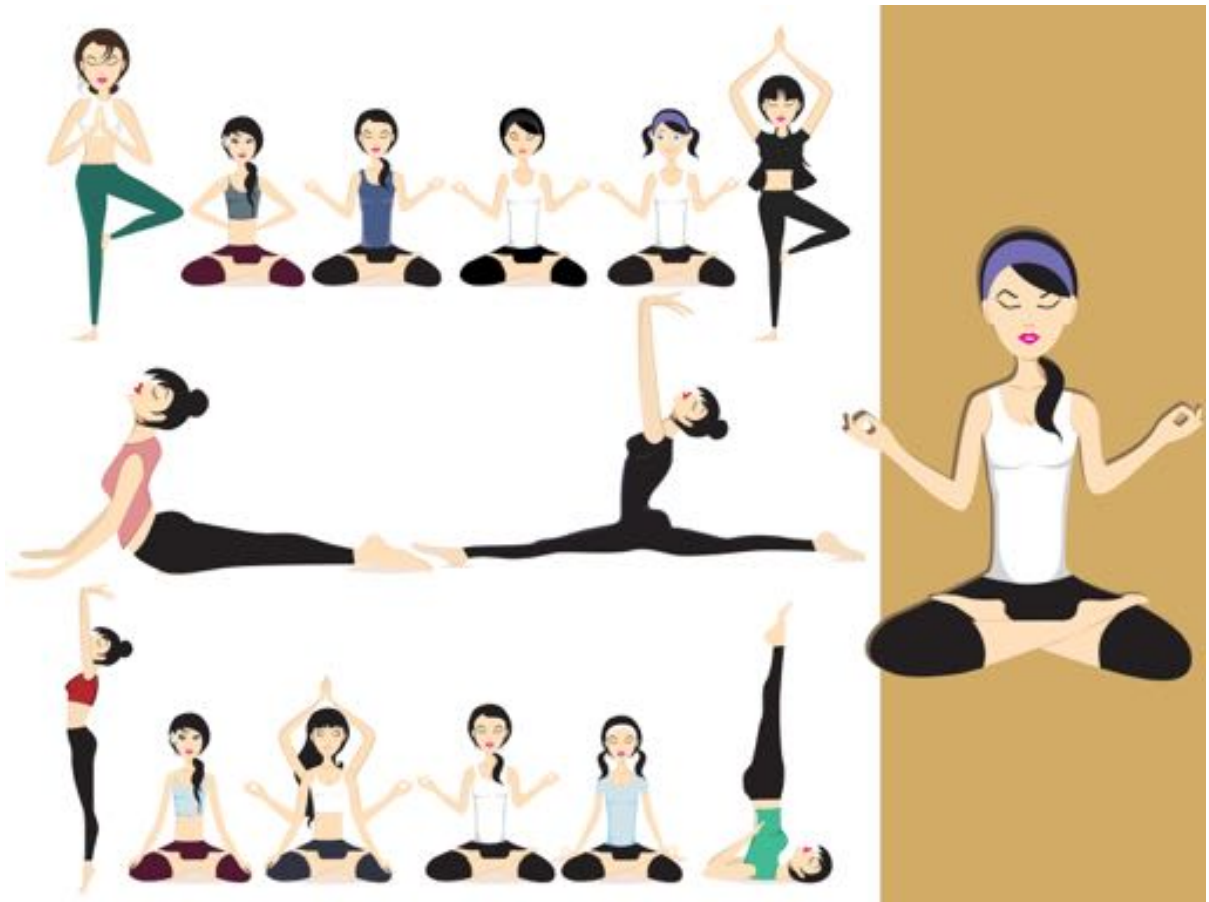
This is exciting news as it has become scientifically proven that exercise isn't just good for occupational therapy in the field of recovery, but it actually has the potential to repair brain cell damage and assist in mood elevation and stabilization by increasing the production of mood-boosting neurochemicals such as dopamine and endorphins. Other studies indicate that it even has the added benefit of potentially tempering impulsive / compulsive behaviors, as it also increases production of serotonin. This means fewer relapses resulting in an increased recovery success rate, which is at the alarming low rate of 3 to 5% to date.

Does every exercise produce the same results? No! The general belief is that cardio promotes weight loss, yoga creates long, lean sculpted bodies or that a local personal trainer will give you the discipline and tools to achieve the body of your dreams. While these statements may hold some truth to them, the notion that all exercise provides maximum opportunity for brain health and recovery is a myth. Here are some of the most popular myths that keep people stuck in dead ends, and more often than not even injured.



1. **Losing weight with cardio:** Aerobic activities facilitate burning calories for only the duration of the chosen activity, it also produces a large amount of cortisol in the body (stress hormone) that suppresses the immune system. This can produce weight gain and inflammation. It is hard on the joints. Cardio does release endorphins, so you will have a feel-good sensation, but the negative side effects are numerous and great.
Alternative Tips: A better and more efficient way to go is to change the composition of your body by replacing fat cells into muscle cells through Strength Training. This will further boost your metabolism by enabling you to burn calories up to 72 hours after

your training. Strength Training is just as beneficial for heart health as cardio and is known to release massive amounts of mood boosting neurochemicals faster.



2. Achieve a long, lean sculpted body with yoga. Contrary to popular belief, yoga is not a muscle building / sculpting activity. The body is composed of 2 distinctive types of muscle fibers that have specific and individual purposes: Slow-twitch and fast-twitch fibers. Fast-twitch fibers build and sculpt the body, while slow-twitch fibers promote endurance. Working both muscle fiber types is essential to build and sculpt a strong, lean body. Yoga mainly uses slow-twitch muscle fibers, and isometric contractions that promote endurance, not muscle building. Performing yoga without incorporating strength training activity can result in joint instability caused by overstretching and a loss of those precious fast-twitch muscle fibers. You won't benefit from any substantial caloric burn doing yoga either, and the release of mood-boosting neurochemicals is significantly smaller than strength training, which is known to release a massive amount of endorphins, fast.

3. Cross training compounds results and saves time. Beware, these types of trainings are entirely unsustainable, extremely hard on the body and have an average injury rate of 75%. Unless you are a pro athlete training for specific reasons, don't go there!

Swimming does offer general health benefits no doubt. However, you could develop an unbalanced body and acquire strong arms and shoulders, while your torso area and legs are not getting defined. Olympic swimmers swim thousands of laps weekly and complement their training with weights. You could also begin to appear pudgier, because the body stores fat in order to keep itself warm in the water. Also some studies show that swimming in cold water stimulates the appetite and creates a desire to eat more, resulting in an increase caloric intake, thus weight gain



Walking can also be a valuable stress relief activity and offer health benefits for the body, mind and spirit. You won't get fit though, or prevent saggy arms and dimpled thighs. While walking could help in toning your legs somewhat, it does not sculpt, tone or have the capacity to rebuild lean muscle mass. And it won't do anything for your upper body.

Strength Training: The new kid on the block:

Actually, strength training is not so new. Ancient Egyptian and Greek societies used weight training to gain strength and measure power. Weight lifting can also be traced to India in the 11th century, where people lifted stone dumbbells to help overcome the challenges of daily life.

Some of the scientifically proven benefits of strength training include:

- Boosts metabolism

- Regulates hormonal imbalances
- Builds bone density mass (prevents or reverse osteoporosis)
- Reduces risk of diabetes, heart disease, arthritis
- Improves cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity
- Reduces the appearance of cellulite
- Fights against depression and stabilizes mood behavior

Yes, strength training has superior abilities to produce those wonderful neurochemicals that makes us feel good and have the capability to assist us in being more in control of our lives.



BUT ARE ALL STRENGTH TRAINING PROGRAMS CREATED EQUAL?

Critical components are overlooked in most training systems

1. The role of proper postural alignment

- For the efficient distribution of life energy within the body
- To stabilize mood behavior and fight against depression
- The prevention and rehabilitation of injury

2. The importance of physically strengthening the nervous system

- For emotional stability
- To enable the individual in recovery to make healthy decisions while under stress

These are crucial factors that affect mood behavior, general well-being and physical health and will dramatically influence, not only the recovery success rate but also one's quality of life in general.

What needs to be understood is the information received in a therapy session is intellectual data. Once you leave the session you need to ground the body physically in order to maintain emotional and mental stability under stress and apply to tools provided by your therapist.

The body is a physical entity that reacts to the law of gravity. It is a self-healing organism and the nervous system is responsible for it's healing.

So lets just take a moment and explore the role of the nervous system in the recovery process.

Our nervous system controls the function of every cell, tissue and organ in our body and coordinates them together as to enable our body to work in perfect harmony. True health means that our body is functioning at a hundred per cent capacity, and this does not necessarily represent how we feel. A person could have cancer or heart disease and feel great, but obviously be in very poor health.

It is important to make the connection that health, mental and physical, including sobriety, is controlled by our nervous system. Therefore, in order to have true health, the nervous system must be able to control and coordinate the function of every cell, tissue and organ without interference.

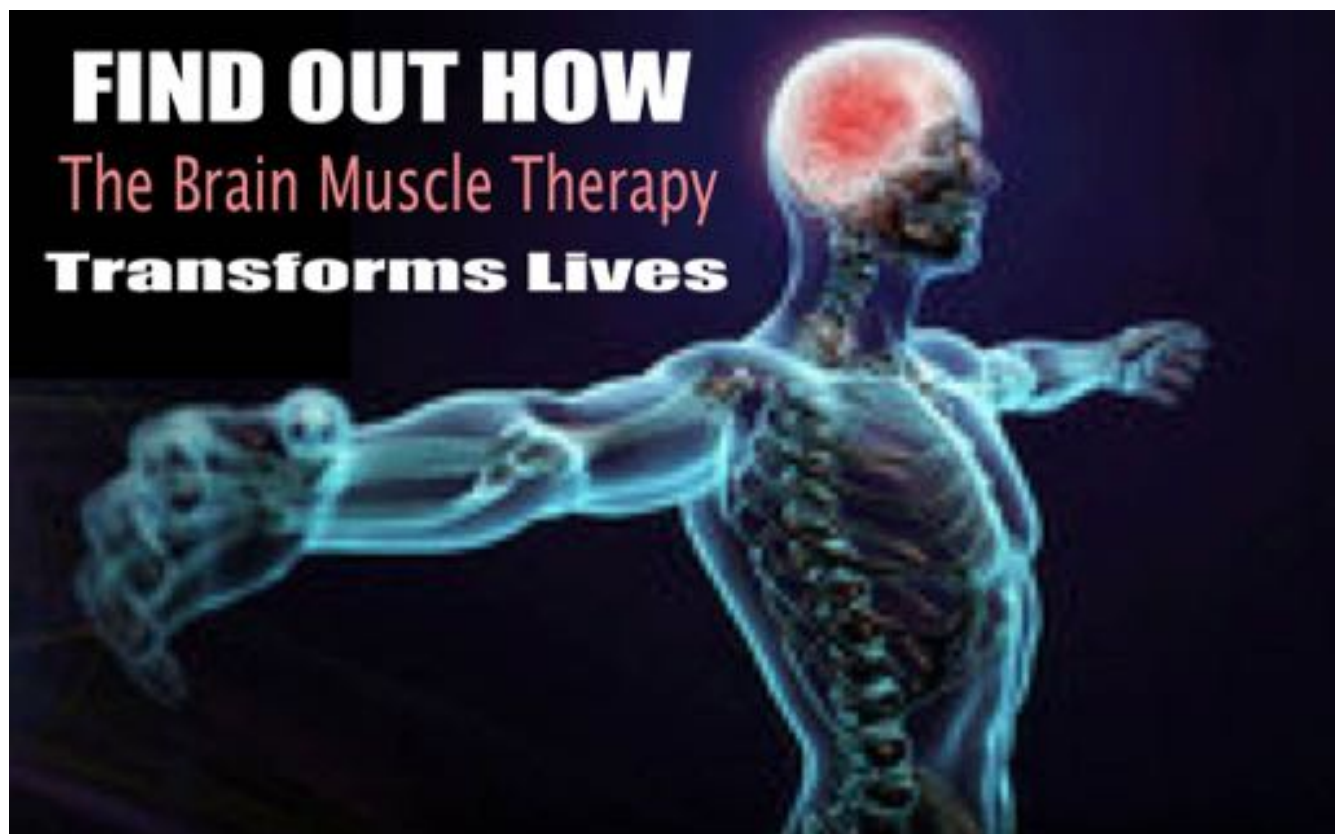
The brain and spinal cord are connected to every cell an organ via our spinal nervous system. The spine, to assist them, is composed of three types of nerves.

Sensory nerves: These nerves tell our brain what is happening in our internal and external environment.

Motor nerves: These nerves controls and coordinate our muscles.

Autonomic nerves: These nerves control and coordinate our organs and glands.

To recap, in simple terms, if the electrical box in your house is too small, you will probably find the lights flickering on and off when you run too many appliances at the same time. You may even blow a fuse because the circuit is on overload. In order to accommodate the load, you will need to upgrade or even completely rewire your electrical system.



It is the same with the nervous system; if put on overload, it will not be able to handle the stress in your life. The nervous system is the control and communication system of the body. Its job is to send and receive messages. The nervous system controls all our thoughts and movements, via the spinal column.

That is why we must learn to protect and strengthen our nervous system and concern ourselves with proper postural alignment in order to clear the neuromuscular pathways to the brain.

There are multiple ways to calm the nervous system, for example walking in nature, hugging a tree, breathing, meditating, which are helpful but only address the issue partially.

The Body Design Formula created by Dr. Fitness USA offers a revolutionary protocol. The body undergoes a targeted series of specific sequences of strength training exercises that impact the nervous system with a tremendous amount of physical strength and releases a massive dosage of endorphins throughout the body very rapidly. This process links the brain-muscle connection, instantly quiets the mind and creates an immediate feeling of calm, empowerment and accomplishment.

At the same time, this protocol addresses postural alignment and muscular imbalances. The side effects are a beautifully sculpted body and a physique you could only dream of having, beyond your wildest imagination. Body Design Formula by Dr. Fitness USA is quite unique in its applications and outcomes.

Now it is important to mention that not every exercise modality is created equal and produce the results above mentioned. As a matter of fact, some could be seriously counter productive to the recovery process, a healthy body, mind and spirit, and even purely and simply detrimental; it is unfortunate to witness well-intentioned fitness aficionados become injured as a result of following plans that put unnecessary stress on the nervous system, joints, tendons and ligaments, Too many exercise programs do not provide as healthy and solid foundation.

I will illustrate my point with a metaphor.



THE THREE LITTLE PIGS:

We all know the story of the three little pigs, right? The first pig built his house with straw, the second used sticks, the third one was smarter and even though it required more patience and more work, he built his house with bricks. When the big bad wolf came, and huffed and puffed, he blew down both houses made of straw and sticks, only the house made of bricks held up.

And so it is with the human body. Sadly, most people address their fitness regimen without a plan and without understanding the crucial importance of building a strong foundation, which means addressing issues such as restoring proper postural alignment and strengthening the nervous system as mentioned above, as well as correcting muscle and structural imbalances, among other factors like taking into consideration lifestyle and environment.

And so, as depicted in the three little pigs' tale, when the unexpected challenges of life happen, inevitably the body gives out, unless you have prepared yourself ahead of time.

The three foundational pillars that differentiate the Body Design Formula Strength Training System created by Dr. Fitness USA from other fitness modalities, have guaranteed its success for over four decades, and establish it as the only logical choice for inner and outer fitness are:

1. Symmetry: postural alignment and correcting muscular imbalances that lead to injuries
2. Strength: physical and emotional stability by strengthening the body and the nervous system
3. Sustainability: Long term vision for a balanced lifestyle in body mind and spirit

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