



REVOLUTION IN RECOVERY & STRESS CONTROL

We all know the importance of exercise for general well being. It has been scientifically proven that physical fitness helps in the prevention of diseases, and is even helpful in fighting depression. However, nowhere in the official guidelines for recovery, is there a mention of the importance exercise may play in the field of recovery!

Regardless, recovery centers and individuals are naturally beginning to incorporate certain types of exercises in their recovery action plan.

However, two critical factors are generally overlooked when selecting an exercise modality to support the recovery process:

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. In order for the information received to take hold, one needs to be grounded physically as to maintain emotional stability under stress and be able to apply the tools provided by the therapist.

The body 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.

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.

Some of the methods known to calm the nervous system are walking in nature, hugging a tree, breathing, meditating even yoga. These are helpful tools but only address the issue partially.

More and more research is now pointing to the superior benefits of strength training for the prevention of diseases, but also to stabilize multiple mood behavior conditions, as it releases massive doses of endorphins in the body. When done specifically, strength training is not only beneficial to ground a person emotionally by strengthening the nervous system, but it can also correct postural alignment and muscular imbalances.

However, It is important to mention that not every strength-training system is created equal and necessarily produce the results above mentioned. Some modalities, such as cross-fit and insanity routines for example could be seriously counter productive by putting unnecessary stress on the nervous system, joints, tendons and ligaments, and potentially create long term injuries.

A metaphor would be the story of the three little pigs. 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 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. As depicted in the three little pigs' tale, unless you have prepared yourself ahead of time, when the unexpected challenges of life happen, you will not be able to sustain the weather.

When choosing an exercise program, keep in mind all the wonderful benefits strength training offers, and do your due diligence in choosing an intelligent workout plan that supports the foundational principles here mentioned.

Written by Batista Gremaud Author of *"How to lose weight and look good with strength training"* Coming to a book store near you *"Stronger than Medicine"*
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