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Dynamic Systems Rehabilitation
Interview with owner Matthew Taylor, PT (DS)
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EXERCISING DISCRETION

“You can’t heal what you can’t feel,” says Matthew Taylor, owner of Dynamic Systems Rehabilitation in north Scottsdale. He is developing new techniques involving the whole patient in order to achieve a greater levels of healing. He is leading physical rehabilitation into a more compassionate and whole person approach.

MR: How do you describe your services?

DS: I’m a physical therapist who uses yoga therapy techniques to treat the whole person. It’s a specific, personalized approach that not only teaches WHAT to do to feel better, but HOW to discover useful steps for moving with ease and comfort. I empower the client by teaching them a process of learning to discover what does and doesn’t work to enhance their ease of movement and comfort in their unique circumstances.

MR: Who can benefit from your services and why?

DS: Anyone with difficulty controlling pain or movement, joint stiffness, prior injuries, osteoporosis, stress related illnesses, sleep disorders, headaches or neurological problems.

MR: How are you different in your approach to the human body?

DS: I take a broader view of my patients, not only the mechanics of their body. I consider ALL the relationships (systems) they’re in, including their vocation, nutrition, level and type of exercise, emotional being, and spiritual practices. I then help them identify how each of those impacts their ability to move and consequently their comfort.

MR: How important is proper movement and exercise as we age, and why?

DS: The key word is “proper” and it’s critically important because as aging healthy humans we must maintain bone mass, cardiovascular health, and emotional and mental clarity. We need to be mindful in our movement...to be learning something. In many gyms you will see how “mindless” most exercise is with people repeating the same motions over and over, learning nothing new about themselves or their capacity for new movement. We need to pay attention to how we stand and our comfort level in exertion. I prefer no TV or other distractions that take us out of our experience at the time.

MR: What are some exercise and movement no-no’s for people over 50?

DS: Given that one-half of the people over 50 in the US are at risk for osteoporosis (thinning bones), we’re clearly need to learn to protect our skeletal health. Some traditional exercise routines put excessive strain on our bones, such as most abdominal exercise, standing toe touches and the emphasis on building the front of the upper body. Good bone health dictates we should be working on the muscles we CAN’T see in the mirror.

MR: What are the most pronounced limitations of which we should be aware?

DS: We often fail to question deeply our way of living and moving so we can become more mindful. We need to ask “why” several times at deeper levels so we eventually get to the *real* answer. “Why am I doing this when... it hurts, ... it’s boring, ...when I am exhausted?” These are questions that point to profound questions of relationship with one’s self and ask, “Am I using discretion to develop a saner, more compassionate health practice?” People are surprised at the answers they arrive at when they dig past the first superficial answers of “It’s good for me.” “I read this is necessary.”, etc.

MR: What specific training have you had to learn your techniques?

DS: The techniques come from a unique combination of a Masters of Physical Therapy degree from Baylor University, seven years of corporate fitness training for the US Army, owning a health club in Illinois the past eight years while teaching accredited mind~body professional medical education nationally and completing my candidacy for a PhD in adult transformational learning and change.

MR: What surprises you most about today’s health club trainers?

DS: Many remain stuck in the solely mechanical approach to health despite marketing “Body~Mind~Spirit”. Health club services would be improved by

teaching trainers how to identify all the relationships that intertwine in human health. Should one really teach a 72 year old round-shouldered grandmother to bench press?

MR: What should everyone do as part of his/her exercise routine?

DS: Learn something about yourself each time; don't just endure it. Enjoy your activities. Try new things, such as yoga, tai chi, climbing or dance.

MR: What *shouldn't* everyone do?

DS: Sit-ups, standing toe touches, resisted seated twists, stepping activities without control, to name just a few.

MR: I've read that bending over from the waist does damage to the spine. True or false?

DS: Bending over improperly can damage the spine ...learning how to properly doesn't.

MR: What do you wish people knew about caring for the body to help them age gracefully?

DS: Exercise and mindful movement can be a hobby for a lifetime and bring some of the greatest pleasures in life.

MR: If men are from Mars and women are from Venus, how different are their preferred exercise routines?

DS: Dramatically different in many ways: physical capacities, aesthetic preferences, sociability differences and understanding the forceful vs. nurturing aspects of movement.

MR: What time of day is best for exercise?

DS: The time of day that allows you to sustain the practice.

MR: Why do so many people suffer from back problems?

DS: Over one-half of chronic spine pain has a significant emotional or psychological component. Anger, fear and lack of forgiveness play a major role. We're back to asking "why?" in our most basic relationship with our self...Why don't ...I rest...breathe deeply...play more...take time to nourish myself properly?

MR: How does one create motivation?

DS: a) have an exercise buddy; b) make the activity enjoyable; and 3) create clear intention and direction with short-term goals.

MR: Are there any books you recommend?

DS: To begin an exciting new relationship with your body I suggest *Love & Survival* by Dr. Dean Ornish and *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn.