



FLEXIBILITY VERSUS MOBILITY TRAINING

By Chris Watts-Motion Dynamics

Flexibility training refers to the retraining of the elastic properties of the soft tissue system from muscles to fascia to connective tissue.

Mobility is the unrestricted movement surrounding the 360 joints in your body. You need to achieve flexibility firstly in order to gain full range of Motion surrounding the joint structures.

Joints when fully aligned and healthy, should ideally allow friction free movements. In other words when you run or walk you should not feel any resistance or restriction in the joints.

For seniors it is important as with resistance training, to start this pliability and flexibility training very gently with little pressure or effort at the end of the range of movement. You should repeat the less elastic movements often so that you get used to the new sensations from the ease of motion and new extended joint ranges.

The process is much more about letting go of the hardwired habits that created this lack of flexibility in the first place. We have found that when the soft tissue is underused it can get very glued together almost like thick adhesions in the muscles and fascia. To break down these adhesions and to create an optimal slide and glide to the layers of tissues you will need to contract one muscle group on one side of the joint to lengthen and stretch the opposing or target muscle group. When lengthening a muscle to its maximum point the stretch is held for a 2 second hold past the natural end of range.

The fluids within the soft tissue sheaths will be literally squeezed out or flushed out. As you actively release the stretch and bring the limb back to the start position or zero tension

state, all the fresh nutrients and fluids refill and replenish the muscle and fascial cells so that in effect, during the stretch cycle you are pumping in nutrients and flushing out waste and lymph each time you move the limb through the full range of movement. This so called "Squeeze and Refill" was observed by Dr. Leon Chaitow at the Montreal Fascial conference where he used an ultrasound device to observe this exchange taking place. What we as Mobility trainers are doing is creating a lubrication and buffer between these fascial sheets. Preventing them from de-hydrating and potentially getting injured.

Each of us is unique in the way we move and the way we walk (gait).

We need to make the client acutely aware of where their restrictions are and how we can actively make those necessary changes to transform and re pattern those movements.

Our bodies are designed to find the most comfortable position to get out of pain. Once we have adapted to that new position we quickly learn to assume that this is the new norm for our body structure. The problem with this adaptation is that this now becomes hardwired and set in the motor cortex which is like our brains hard drive in the cerebellum. To unravel and change, we will then need to undo and rewire the alignment and the movement patterns to make sure that the body is working optimally and that we distribute the weight of gravity and the weight of our bodies correctly and evenly and symmetrically.

This new shift may require many days and sometimes weeks of practice but it can always be achieved no matter what age you are. Depending how long the body has been stuck in the adaptive position it will also require some new stability training to keep and maintain this new position. Muscles that are overused and tight are weak. Muscles that are underused and tight are weak too.

A weak muscle does not shunt blood and nutrients easily and also it does not eliminate lymphatic waste either. We often refer to these muscles as being Hypoxic: They lack Oxygen and therefore are very acidic and sore when they are touched. A highly vascularized muscle is soft and pliable and has a spring to its tissues and is rarely sore when you palpate it.

Older clients are highly motivated as any small change in their posture or movement patterns is immediately translated into greater energy levels and if they are golfers or tennis players a greater swing arc and more power generation. For us it is also about a better way to prepare you for your physical activities and to reduce the likelihood of hurting yourself through sprains and strains that can easily come about from a lack of warming up or lack of general mobility in the joints.

There is no right way to move only better ways!!!

by Chris Watts – Founder & CEO - Motion Dynamics

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