

The Massage Advantage

April 2010 ~ Warming Up

Active aGING

It's common knowledge that getting older involves diminished functioning, that the body and mind slow down significantly. Older adults often experience multiple aches and pains, slow recovery from injury, forgetfulness, and loss of motor skills. And the experts are quick to say what to expect 'at your age. . .'.

What's missing from the aging conversation, however, is the role of activity. Recent studies show that declining health and function have as much or more to do with lack of activity than just having birthdays. That getting older by itself does not mean we can't do physical things—the level of idleness is huge!

"Aging is associated with decreased muscular strength and endurance, correlating to a decline in the quality of life and functional capacity. The inactivity associated with aging is probably the greatest contributor...rather than a function of aging per se", Aaron Covey and Peter Jokl¹.

Others agree. According to Lee and Park², older adults who are physically active experience depression and disability less than older adults who are inactive. And Visser, etal³ found that lack of activity can cause older adults to lose mobility.

The science is only confirmation of what is obvious to many—that active seniors are the healthiest. I marvel at older adults I see playing tennis and working out and running marathons, and hope that I'm as active as they in my golden years. And word of the benefits of physical activity during aging is spreading. Colette Bouchez reported that *"...folks over 50 [are] making up the fastest-growing segment of the fitness population"⁴.*

To enhance these benefits, Covey & Jokl offer these tips:

- Sport-specific training enhances performance
- Endurance training can enhance Cardiovascular systems to age 70
- Weight-training can minimize or reverse age-related declines in muscle mass well into the 80's
- Nutrition is critical for optimal health & performance, including proteins, fats & vitamins. Adequate carbohydrate consumption is important for the brain, the body's only carb-dependent organ.
- Stretching slows the decline in flexibility

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The WTA players I worked with at the 2010 BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells are from all over the world. They speak fluent English and inspired me to learn my favorite massage word in a few different languages:

Ontspan Relaxazate
Entspannen
Relaxe Descansa
Reslabsiya
Rozluznij sie

***SO NO MATTER HOW YOU SAY IT,
THE MESSAGE IS THE SAME...***

RELAX

CAMP BRYAN³

Presented by The Massage Advantage

Las Vegas Tennis Weekend: Dec. 12, 09~Las Vegas Hilton, Las Vegas Country Club; Dec. 13, 09~Stirling Club

Camp Bryan³ kicked off on Day 1 with the best of Las Vegas tennis at the Las Vegas Hilton. Local tennis pros taught participants in cardio tennis and group lessons until rain disrupted play, which was later resumed indoors at the Las Vegas Country Club.

Day 2 of Camp Bryan³ was all about the Bryans! Bob, Mike, and Wayne Bryan highlighted the day's activities at the Stirling Club. Local Fitness Specialist Korey Goodwin jump-started the day with a dynamic fitness warm-up. Wayne ensued with instructional tennis games. Participants then separated into groups that rotated courts, and actually hit with Bob & Mike!! The last tennis activity of the day was the pro-am round-robin tournament. Bob, Mike, Rick Leach, Tim Blenkinson, Asia Muhammad, Dorian Geba and other pros showcased their talents for spectators.

Then the Boys rocked the house! The Bryan Bros Band, featuring Bob, Mike, lead singer David Baron, and Wayne, performed tunes from their first CD, *Let It Rip* and oldies, also at the Stirling Club. Local talents Domenick Allen, former lead singer of Foreigner, Cayleigh Allen, and Ellie Smith opened the show. Guests mingled with the Bryans then danced the night way.

Special thanks to the following sponsors: The Massage Advantage, Stirling Club, Las Vegas Hilton, HFTP Las Vegas, Tennis Channel, Oakley, John Fish Jewelers, Port of Subs, M Resort, Jerry Albus DDS, USTA Nevada, G Alex Foundation, Roni Josef Salon, VegasTennis.com.

Event proceeds benefited USTA-Nevada's Junior & Multicultural Tennis Programs



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The Power of Expectation

They say it's all in the mind. Could they be right? Sports Psychology studies are now looking at how expectations (mentality) form or control behavior and create self-fulfilling prophecy. *Distorted Thinking*¹ discussed how specific (faulty) thoughts produce emotional reactions in the body, such as anxiety (nervous energy), guilt & fear. And these emotions cause muscles to tighten, stiffen, and lead to subpar performance.

How you think predisposes your body to specific actions and outcomes. If you think something will go well, it usually does. If you think something won't work, then it probably won't. As you think, so you behave. Your mind and thinking patterns are incredibly powerful and are intimately connected to behavior.

Jugo & Maquirriain² studied the placebo effect and found that "emotional responses...have the ability to shape affective responses, expectations, and future behavior". Thus, what you think and expect are directly related to what you do and how you do it! As reported in *The Perception of the Placebo Effect in Athletes: The Potential Role of the Self-fulfilling Prophecy*, Jugo & Maquirriain reported the following responses to the placebo effect:

- ⇒ Placebo surgery works better than placebo injections
- ⇒ Placebo injections work better than placebo pills
- ⇒ Placebo acupuncture works better than placebo pills
- ⇒ Big pills work better than small ones
- ⇒ More doses/day work better than fewer doses
- ⇒ More expensive treatments work better than the less expensive
- ⇒ The pill color makes a difference
- ⇒ "This will relieve your pain" works better than "This might help".

So belief and expectation of the patient/participant are often

Continued next column

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I cannot say enough about the wonderful massages that Glen Alex...has done for me. ...Glen has...addressed specific issues with my shoulders, legs and back from playing tennis.

The relief I experienced always surpassed every expectation. I particularly recommend Glen's technique to stretch out the lower back to all my friends. She's great with Kinesio Taping too.

Getting a massage from Glen Alex is a real pleasure!

Janice

Continued from previous column

more influential in the treatment outcome than the actual intervention. And this power of expectation is generalizable to most areas of life. For example, what do we teach children to expect in terms of their abilities and strengths? And how often do they underachieve or overachieve accordingly? How often do we say "what's the point?" and not act or do so half-heartedly, leading to the anticipated outcome?

Beliefs form specific thought patterns and expectations. These patterns and expectations trigger behaviors that direct us toward the expectation. It's a nutty loop that is, nonetheless, breakable. It will take a concerted effort to recognize the connection between the expectation and the outcome. Then address either the faulty thinking pattern or alter the unconstructive behavior.

Relaxation techniques such as meditation and massage can create enough peace in the mind and body to enhance your awareness of the nutty loop. And thereby give you conscious control over your mind and behavior, and possibly more productive outcomes.

glen

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1. Alex, Glen, *Distorted Thinking: Its effects on the body*, Whole Being Massage, Summer 2005.
2. Jugo, Tamara & Maquirriain, Javier, *The Perception of the Placebo Effect in Athletes: The Potential Role of the Self-fulfilling Prophecy*, Journal of Medicine and Science in Tennis, October 2009.

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the only moment

A few years ago I added "now is the only moment there is" as my email signature. My good friend Rhonda reacted adversely. "I don't like it. Makes me feel like I don't have enough time". That was my point. Sort of.

The only moment that does exist is the one we're experiencing right now. The precise instant we think this or that, do this or that. Five minutes ago and five minutes from now are not now. Only now is now. So while we have time, we don't have time to waste. Moments do, however, string together to create the sense of 'time'. But now is the only opportunity available to participate in life. Or choose not to.

My mother's illnesses reminded me of this simple yet complex concept. I witnessed her struggle with diminishing health and eroding independence, and heard her remarks about "making up for lost time" when discharged, referring of course to doing her own thing. The reality is (was) that because of her conditions, she would never be able to "do her own thing" again. It then dawned on me that lost time is lost, unrecoverable.

And I remembered that while tomorrow is not promised, now is a glorious gift. I suddenly felt saddened by how I, my mother, and just about every one else squander moments with the expectation of getting them back some day. But what day? If life tomorrow is not guaranteed, then why do we assume disregarded moments are?

glen

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I add that recovery is also vital to maintaining activity levels. And while stretching and hydration (nutrition) are important, Massage Therapy is a significant component in the recovery process. Therapeutic Massage increases circulation, facilitates the elimination of toxins, reduces pain and stress (positive & negative), and promotes relaxation.

Therefore active seniors should incorporate Massage Therapy to help maintain their physical functioning and overall well-being. Active Aging reduces the decline in physical functioning and can ward off depression and disability. All active seniors are wise to consult their primary care providers for guidance about specific activities and intensity.

So if you're an older adult and inactive, get active...do something. Then get a massage!

glen

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