

SET TALK

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EXPANDING YOUR VIEW FOR TREATING ATHLETES

Recently I was working with a 68 year old nationally ranked senior woman's golfer. She was telling me that she was playing some of the best golf of her life. She mentioned that she wished she had found me years earlier so she could have played this caliber of golf or better for her entire adult life. She then asked me if I thought working with children would expand their athletic potential. This led to about an hour discussion about what the possibilities could be in an athlete's life.

The first major topic that we discussed was developing the young athlete's potential. When young athletes are limited by the collapses and strains found in the body before the core distortion (structural spiral) is released, they are handicapped from the start. In my work I use kinesiology to evaluate muscle strength and function related to the core distortion. What has become obvious is that there is a 40% - 60% loss of strength and function of at least 1/3 of the major muscle groups in every young athlete when they start their athletic career. If we take the lower percentage of 40% loss of muscle function and strength, then it is conceivable that this athlete can only achieve 60% of their effectiveness in their sport.

Most athletic endeavors require running and coordination. This is severely limited by the 40% loss due to the core distortion. If we bring the affected muscle groups up to their full potential strength and function, then it follows that their running and coordination will be greatly enhanced. Thus, their athletic potential will take a significant leap forward.

Young athletes: When we treat young developing children with athletic potential we will see a more rapid development of their athletic skills at an earlier age. An example of this is Melissa, a 10 year old female, who had the core distortion released at the age of seven. She had been taking gymnastics since the age of two and was a very talented gymnast. However, her grandmother, who follows her gymnastic career, noticed an immediate improvement in Melissa's balance beam techniques, and floor and uneven bar routines, following the release of the core distortion. Her balance and coordination were dramatically improved. This allowed her to move quickly from level one to the advanced level five where, at the age of 10, she took top honors in all her gymnastics meets statewide. It is easy to see from this example that there is a potential rapid increase in the

development of athletic skills following the release of the core distortion.

Another important aspect of Melissa's improved strength and coordination is that she has yet to have any injuries, even with the dangers of her sport. Many of the other girls in the competitions have had ankle and back injuries. She was able to improve her skills and excel quickly without having the limitations from injuries that require healing and rehabilitation as well as leaving lasting weaknesses in the injured areas. Injuries at a young age can greatly limit the maximum potential in the developing athlete. Not having these limitations leaves an uncluttered path for this 10 year old gymnast to continue her development of all her athletic endeavors. This is only one of many examples of the amazing effect that releasing the core distortion has in young athletes.

Teenage athletes: Again, they will regain the reduced 40% of their muscle strength and function. They usually have developed more athletic skills than the younger athletes and will see an immediate increase in their skill level and application of skills in their sports.

A high school cross country team had three of its key runners suffering from muscles pulls and strains that were directly related to the limitations found with the core distortion. They had the potential to be a very good team. However, with three of their five top runners either out for the season or limited to partial training, they weren't going to go very far. The star runner had a severe hamstring pull and was told he would not be able to run for 6-10 weeks - the regional qualifying meet was in seven weeks. The other two runners had lesser pulls and strains which limited their training, and they could only compete every other week. After applying the Cranial/Structural Core Distortion Release techniques and specific soft tissue protocols of Structural Energetic Therapy®, the star recovered and was fully competing in four weeks. His hamstrings now were 40% stronger than before the injury. The other two runners saw immediate improvement with the same treatments and were able to resume normal full training within a week and competed in every meet. At the regional qualifying meet all three of the top runners were competing with their personal best times and qualified the team for the state championship meet. Two weeks later they actually won the men's high school cross country state title with all three runners posting a personal best time.

What is evident here is that treating sports injuries by releasing the core distortion is extremely effective. Most sports injuries take place in the muscle groups that are weakened by the core distortion. Restoring full strength to these muscle groups not only speeds up the healing

process but also unlocks previously unusable muscle strength and coordination to realize their full potential.

The runners of the cross country team not only rehabbed their injuries and achieved greater success in their sport, but they were also injury-free throughout their training and competitions for the rest of the year. Apply this treatment concept to other athletes and see the difference that can be made in what can be achieved. Whether it is football, basketball, baseball, track, soccer, swimming, tennis, golf, wrestling, etc., if muscle strength and coordination are important for achieving full potential, or if there is a direct relationship to the “normal” injuries found in the sport, there is a huge benefit to the athlete to have the core distortion released.

Professional athletes: These athletes are competing at the top of their sport where tiny variations in speed, strength and function make the difference between success and failure. They also seldom if ever reach that professional level without numerous injuries along the way. I have worked with numerous professional athletes mainly in a rehabilitative setting. One good example is a baseball pitcher with shoulder issues. He had been diagnosed with a rotator cuff injury with inflammation and was facing losing his season after being knocked out of the game when pitching in spite of the injury. Approximately one half of the muscles affecting the shoulder and arm loose 40% of their strength and function due to the core distortion. It was no surprise that the injury and inflammation were found in that tissue. Releasing the core distortion using both Cranial/Structural Core Distortion Releases and advanced Structural Energetic Therapy® soft tissue techniques had an immediate positive effect. Not only did the arm become stronger by regaining its previously unavailable 40% strength and function, but the injured tissue was treated directly by softening scar tissue and rehabilitating the inflamed injured muscle tissue. After three treatments this pitcher was pain free, regained full range of motion in his shoulder, and was back in the pitching rotation. Of note, his fast ball speed increased from 91-92 mph to 94-96 mph with greater movement.

Several old injuries including hamstring and ankle were also treated in subsequent sessions – these were areas of weakness prior to having the core distortion released. His strength and function improved dramatically with the release of the core distortion, and this pitcher, who was on the backside of his career, felt that having these injuries fully rehabilitated gave him several more years of performance.

I also was given the privilege of working with a professional soccer team for several years. Overall the team had fewer injuries because of the release of the

core distortion in the players. Even when there were injuries the recovery time was shorter. Plus, some of the injuries which could have been lasting nagging problems were quickly rehabilitated allowing the players to progress through the season as if they had not been injured. The combination of fewer injuries and less recovery time resulted in the team going further in the playoffs than they had in years. This team was also composed older players in the last years of their career who greatly appreciated the renewed strength in areas that were previously injured prior to having the core distortion released. Many experienced the best season of their career. The whole soccer team benefitted – the players had fewer injuries due to the release of the core distortion, and the injuries they had were less severe and more easily rehabbed. Many players had the strength and speed that they thought had been lost years before when they were younger.

As you can see from the above examples, the release of the core distortion has the potential to extend athletic careers in the following ways: **1.** there is an increase in strength and function in areas that were previously injured; **2.** there are fewer injuries due to the strength and stability of the muscles and joints; **3.** there will be an increase in the balance of the structure which will expand the available athletic potential. All of this gives athletes the chance to extend their athletic careers.

Weekend Warriors: I have talked about the developing or already developed athletes in this article. There is equal benefit for weekend warriors. Increased muscle strength and function will play a big part in their ability to participate in whatever sport at whatever level. This will also affect their resistance to injury, and length of their participation in their favorite sports.

What is very obvious is that massage therapists who know how to release the core distortion in their athletic clients can have a significant long term positive effect in helping them realize their maximum athletic potential, avoid injuries, and extend their careers. The most complete release of the core distortion I have found involves releasing this distortion in the cranium with the Cranial/Structural technique bringing the ilium and sacrum into weight bearing integrity, followed by integrating specific myofascial deep tissue work to release the soft tissue holding patterns. I hope this article has opened your eyes to a way of expanding and protecting the potential and well-being of your athletic clients.

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