

# WHAT THE FOOT?



A GAME CHANGING PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN MOVEMENT  
ELIMINATING PAIN AND MAXIMISING HUMAN POTENTIAL

BY GARY WARD

**SAMPLE CHAPTERS**



## WHAT THE FOOT?



# CHAPTER 1: THE JOURNEY BEGINS

**"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Lao Tzu**

"You're doing what?" I asked.

"Running seven ultra-marathons in seven days on seven different continents."

I think my next question was "Why?"

When I asked Oliver Dudley how I could help, he told me he had to do it in five weeks' time and he had currently injured his hip to the point of not being able to bear weight on his left leg.

I wasn't surprised to hear that this had happened as a result of him going from zero training to running a straight unprepared 10 miles.

"You're a novice runner as well?" I probed.

"Yes, that's my thing," he suggested nonchalantly. "I was part of the World record-breaking team to row across the Atlantic having never set foot on a boat in my life before!"... and he can't even swim!

My own limiting belief kicked in, though I didn't share it with Oliver, but how the \*\*\*\* was he going to do this event in five weeks' time with little or no preparation. Anyone with two brain cells would most likely prepare a year for something like this. The guy would need a miracle.

So I said "Yes."

At that time it wasn't unusual for me to eliminate somebody's pain in a matter of minutes using the methodology I have developed. That was in March 2009. Since then I have pushed both professional therapists and personal trainers through my training programmes and worked incredibly hard to bring alive the concept that comes so naturally to me: reading and working with the human body... isn't it ironic that my mission is to bring the human body alive? There is, however, a certain truth in that. Never has the human body been so alive, and yet the worlds of fitness and therapy still thrive on evidence based on dead people in an attempt to try and understand how the human body operates.

My mission is simple: to create an awareness of new ways of working with the human body in therapy, performance and coaching circles and bring that alive for fitness and therapy professionals alike – and even the layman, for even he can take control of his own wellbeing, should he choose to.

## GROWING PAINS

With a population of nearly eight billion and growing, the world is full of people in pain. Postural distortions, injuries and physical complaints are rife. We have a range of people competing at the top of their game whose daily toil is to stay injury free, and when that policy fails, the question is how quickly can they get back on the field of play?

Thankfully we have a whole industry set up to deal with that; it comprises of therapists such as

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physiotherapists, osteopaths, chiropractors and massage and bodyworkers who work day and night to help you with your pain and problems.

There are also hundreds and thousands of personal trainers, yoga teachers, Pilates instructors, functional trainers, corrective exercise specialists, strength and conditioning coaches and goodness knows what else out there to work on strength, core stability and performance to give the masses access to optimal fitness and wellbeing. If you fit into any of these categories, this book could be for you. I'm going to refer to you all throughout this book as 'fitness and therapy professionals'.

My real question has always been: "With so many fitness and therapy professionals around, all fully trained up, educated to degree standard and seeking continual education, why are so many people still suffering from pain and is there anything else that can be done about it?" The difference, I think, lies in the scientific research and the determination of that research that has, over time, influenced these two industries, establishing the learnings of all fitness and therapy professionals and the methods employed by them to help the masses out of physical strife on a daily basis.

Am I suggesting that current methods don't work? No. Let me be clear, here and now, that that is absolutely not my intention; I will, however, be discussing, based on my experience, some of the potential shortfalls in current methods, as well as bringing to life some of my own theories. Theories, which, in my opinion, act purely as an extension to everything that you, as a fitness and therapy professional, use in your clinical and/or training environment.

My method incorporates full human movement. It's a study of the anatomy in motion and how we (my trained practitioners and I) encourage the body to heal itself through movement. Anatomy in Motion is the name of my business and can be found online at [www.anatomyinmotion.co.uk](http://www.anatomyinmotion.co.uk).

### I AM HERE TO CHALLENGE YOU!

Some of what I am going to say may challenge your current beliefs and thought processes. Some of what I am going to say may challenge your education and may ultimately have you wanting to throw this book against the wall. Hang in there! My honest belief is that what movement offers you is an extension to everything that is already prevalent in today's therapy world. This means when you add the tool of movement to your existing toolbox the potential for results can only get greater and faster. Unsure? Seek out my own AiM practitioners who are qualified chiropractors and osteopaths who share with me outstanding results having incorporated movement into their own traditional clinic environment.

Also seek out the personal trainers, yoga teachers and Pilates instructors that use this movement-based philosophy in their corrective, rehab and performance programmes. The things these guys are getting their clients to do is unbelievable! What's more, all they are doing is using the medium of movement to create an environment for healing in the bodies of their clients and it's happening in very short time frames for very effective results. What's also incredible is that these practitioners, who themselves are often well qualified, experience huge shifts in their own physical prowess once they add the medium of movement into their own exercise, training and wellbeing programmes.

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I teach them all to look at the body in a new, exciting and different way. I teach them to read the body, to let the human body give them all the information they need and to give the client's body no option but to heal itself through a deep and profound understanding of the human body.

This new dimension of understanding has been honed into five big rules about human movement that flip conventional anatomy on its head, rip up the anatomy book as we know it and create a whole new handbook and user guide for the human body. Like many new things, it appears complex at first and simple at the end, the more you play and experience the work, the clearer the process becomes.

For now I ask you to park everything you think you know about the human body to one side, out of sight and mind. Keep it somewhere safe as you'll need it later, but for now, in this, the complexity stage, what you think you know now will only hinder any acceptance of what I am going to tell you. It's possible that you'll fight it, deny it, rubbish it, critique it and question it... and yet when you get the chance to put some of it into practice, like many others it's highly likely that you, too, can begin to see the value in this work. Despite everything, it's the practice and experience of it that will ultimately make the difference for you.

### WHAT STUDYING MOVEMENT CAN DO FOR YOU

I believe that advancing your skills in any way creates new and exciting opportunities for yourself. When that new skill is as unique and high impact as understanding movement is, there are three natural responses:

**A Differentiate yourself**

**B Be in a position to work with people you can't ordinarily work with and have success**

**C Grow your business through a unique approach that gets standout, exceptional results**

### STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

Training providers are literally pumping personal trainers into your local area on a monthly basis. Pilates and yoga schools are doing the same. Every year, more physios, chiropractors and osteopaths qualify in your area. It gets harder and harder to find work – thankfully there are millions of people looking to get out of pain and get fit, strong and healthy again!

If you are to get noticed in your local area, you must stand out from the crowd. You must differentiate yourself from all the rest. One way of doing that is to learn about human movement for correction and rehabilitation, and three-dimensional training and movement for development and performance.

Right now you are not unique: you choose exercises based on what everybody else is doing. Your packages are unlikely to be bespoke and relevant for each client. I know this because there are apps out there on people's phones offering the same service as you – for free. This is a problem for hundreds of exercise coaches and personal trainers. Apps have become your competitor, too. You have to differentiate yourself from them if you are going to get paid doing what you love. If you only offer standardised training, as most apps do, why would someone pay your hourly rate when Nike offers something amazing for free? Even if you don't think it's amazing, to the consumer it is.

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Seek to be different and break the mould of what's expected in your industry. Do this by breaking the mould of your anatomical thinking, understanding and application. Reach beyond what you know and see if there's more to do...

### WIDEN YOUR MARKET

You are good at what you do, you are dedicated and proud to be a successful fitness and therapy professional – but can you work with anyone and can you be successful with everyone who comes your way? If you want to help people resolve unsolvable pain, you had better get both the skill set and experience to do so. Following the five big rules gives you direct access to working with some complex and difficult issues whilst seeing incredible results really quickly. I'm not just saying that – there are a whole host of testimonials from clients and happy students that can validate this. When you ask the body to heal itself, anything is possible. The question should simply be: "How can I get your body to help me better understand what is going on?" As you start to get outstanding results, a wide diversity of both goals and problems will begin to seek you out.

### FORM AN ORDERLY QUEUE

Both your unique approach in your local area and your unfathomable success with the wide variety of clients that come your way means only one thing: recognition. Recognition brings word of mouth, and success brings people to your door. I get calls on a daily basis asking if I can help people with their pain. The answer is always "Yes!"

When people incorporate human movement in the right way into their business, I have noticed a couple of things: they become a source of intrigue and get

more enquiries as to what they do, many of them raise their prices by way of offering a unique product and they become more and more passionate about the work they do based on the clients they attract and the results they see. All this as a result of taking the quantum leap that moves you from being the sheep that follows the herd to being the Pied Piper in your local area.

### AS IN THE BODY, AS IN LIFE

One more thing before we venture into the book... You might notice the analogies I make and comparisons I present in relation to anatomy and life. It's a fascinating wonder for me that when I look at and study the human body as a whole inseparable entity, I notice similarities in the life and function of everything from the smallest cell to the big wide universe – recognising that movement itself experiences that natural ebb and flow of polar fluctuations that has huge and significant connotations to the ways of the world and the habits of the human being that are witnessed all around you on a daily basis: in your work, your relationships, your mood, your behaviours and wellbeing, too.

Keep your eyes open for the little hidden messages and see if you, too, can relate the human body to what goes on in your life. I see it everywhere. By understanding the wholeness of the human body I am able to use the principles and the five big rules to help coach somebody through a difficult situation or manage my own family life better. The way of the universe, the way of the world and the way of the human body seem intrinsically connected and inseparable, adding to the richness and fascination that we as beings represent on this planet.

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If you spot this hidden theme, written between the lines, you'll find it easy to get people out of pain and into peak performance on all levels. You'll find it easy to stand out from the crowd. You'll find yourself attracting clients and patients that you previously could not have been successful with, and you'll notice a long line of people queueing at your door to experience first-hand the magical work you are doing with their friends and colleagues.

That is what this book is really about for you: new tools, a greater understanding of the human body, getting superior results with previously unattainable clients and growing a training and therapy business that helps you lead the life you want to lead. Oh, and all of that whilst being true to your passion – discovering the true inner workings of the human body...

Well, it's here, in this book, sewn into the five big rules of motion. I can't wait to share it with you.

**A BRIEF HISTORY**

Let's assume that we have come to the end of our understanding of traditional anatomy as we know it and through the evolution of practice of that

understanding we can naturally start to open new doors for the future. There has always been a ceiling of knowledge we have been approaching and as we approach that ceiling we realise we still don't have all the answers: so there must be something more, mustn't there? New doors like this will always change the way we work and do things.

We got to where we are today with a very simple question: "How does this thing we call the human body work?"

The answer to this question set a framework for the exercises we do today relative to each individual body part and the therapeutic techniques you apply as well.

The problem is that all exercise and therapy theories were created through the study of anatomy, discovering what joints do and recreating that pattern of movement or muscle action into an exercise to stimulate the muscle function, joint range or both.

Firstly, the research into how this body works took place on dead bodies and in an isolated environment and manner – presumably no live volunteers wanted

**CASE STUDY**

**AiM has changed my life, personally and professionally. Personally, AiM has taken my yoga practice and overall mobility to a different level as I now understand why I had any restrictions I did and how to correct this. Even through the late stages of pregnancy I have maintained full mobility and remained pain free. Professionally speaking, I am a completely different yoga teacher. Anatomy training for yoga teachers is often basic or not necessarily up to date. I now teach with confidence, knowing that what I can offer my students will make a difference from the moment they leave the class. As a result, my classes have never been so busy and private work has trebled. I now have this amazing tool to use to help people help themselves, and watching someone go through such a positive, dramatic change after just one simple move is mind-blowing every time. Gary Ward is my biggest inspiration. Tish Dodson [www.jivahealth.co.uk](http://www.jivahealth.co.uk)**

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the electrical stimulation caused by the original electromyography (EMG) testing!

This created today's awareness of how muscles work and the impact that muscular contraction has on the joint system.

Secondly, this testing took place in an isolated environment, again, primarily because it's difficult to integrate the body parts of a dead person! The result is that for many years we, too, have been forced to work in an isolated environment: separating body parts to exercise them, and isolating treatments, in particular the areas where people have pain.

There are naturally both major limitations and benefits to this process. It seems to me that whenever we interfere like this, with experimentation, that scientific outcome is split keenly down the middle, separating two truths, like removing the egg from the yolk, calling one good and the other bad, or, in this case, simply omitting a whole other process that is natural, integrated and leads to a huge gap in understanding, on the part of today's benefactor – the trainee or student anatomist and ultimately the client who relies on their knowledge to help them.

The problem is not that the top practitioners aren't aware of this: it's the fact that millions of therapists and trainers are sent out into their industries with little appreciation of that, qualified and let loose on the most phenomenal machine in the world – the human body!

So it was discovered that when a muscle is electrocuted, it is also stimulated to contract or

shorten, and when that contraction or shortening takes place, the muscle moves a bone in a specific direction, causing a change in the relevant joint: and the anatomy book was born.

It says that the bicep flexes the elbow and the abdominals flex the spine, which naturally led to the magazines' favourite: bicep curls and sit-ups.

Both of these exercises are prescribed by trainers, adored by the masses and yet can cause negative postural change, which influences pain elsewhere in the body.

The study of anatomy led to a static, isolated and one-dimensional approach to training and therapy and generated the many exercises we are taught to use on our clients and athletes every day. Yet without an understanding of the integrative side of anatomy and movement (the study of live people!) these processes alone will either take too long or lead to problems further down the line – a kind of sweeping it under the carpet approach.

### **Study of movement = the study of live people!**

Should the whole industry be abandoned if every exercise can negatively affect people in that way? No!

We just need to look at the bigger picture, to understand it better and recognise that there are, thankfully, major extensions to the way we work that quickly reinforce conventional treatments and training strategies.

Alone, conventional methods have a place, but combined with movement, to influence the brain,

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nervous system and physical structures, the conventional methods will finally begin to add up and make sense.

This is why I created my five big rules of motion.

**INTRODUCING CHAOS (COINS HAVE ANOTHER SIDE)**

I first had a sense, but now I know, that there is a large part of human anatomical understanding that is missing and, more importantly, that when I, or my students, tap into the part that is missing, there is an undeniable truth that lies beneath it.

I call it the 'other side of the coin' – where most of my opinions appear to oppose and conflict the methods currently being taught. Not a great way of winning friends, I must admit.

However, I should make clear, at this point, that what I am saying and what I am going to pour forth in this book is not in opposition to current methods, but is more of an extension of what already exists. It's simply building onto what we already know to make it more powerful.

You cannot have one side of a coin without the other. Both will always be present, yet one seems to grab the limelight and the other shall be overlooked. Wonderfully, when you put both sides of a coin together, you start to see the bigger picture and greater outcomes become possible. There even arises a third side, upon which both sides of the coin can stand together, solid in the awareness that all outcomes are covered.

Now, I'm not the first person to come onto the scene ranting on about human movement, integration of a wholesome system and the 'treat

the cause, not the pain' approach. Yet movement and integration still fail to be completely present in the world of anatomy.

Frustratingly for me, even current concepts of movement that are rapidly infiltrating the fitness and therapy industry are still heavily focused on the conventional side of the coin, which means, for me, that there remain limitations to understanding human movement and the actual practice of it.

I have a vision where the next step is to see traditional therapies, as well as training and exercise companies, incorporating the full understanding of human movement into their way of working, adapting techniques, getting off the couch – when possible – embracing the true workings of the human body and truly integrating the system as a whole. Bringing both sides of the coin to life, exposing the truth.

The future is confusingly impossible to see. Even on the newer side of the coin, there would appear to be a limit to how we work with the human body, but my feeling is we are a long way off from that, and yet seem so close as well. There are only so many bones, joints, arms and legs to worry about, and understanding the complexity of it all has to be getting simpler – it is getting simpler – but we are not there yet. I do wonder though what would happen to our knowledge and awareness if we brought together all the theories of anatomy, from chiropractic and osteopathic to Pilates and yoga, and wonder often if there lies one simple solution to all of it. Somewhere in the centre...



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## POLITICS?

The political spectrum of anatomy often sees the chiropractors, physios and osteopaths disagreeing on the treatment style of a patient and in many cases openly in front of the patient as well. This leaves the patient confused and with no idea where to turn next.

Imagine the client being told that money they spent on another therapist was wasted and better spent with you. The poor client does not know whether he is coming or going!

Interestingly, on many occasions in discussion with a chiropractor about my work, I hear them say how very chiropractic my approach is... and in conversation with an osteopath how very osteopathic my method is... So underlying it all is clearly a common theme, yet our perceptions of that theme differ wildly depending on our training, education and experience. Much like religion!

**THIS BOOK HAS FOUR INTENTIONS:**

- **To raise awareness of what I call the five big rules of human movement – bringing the other side of the coin alive**
- **To give you an insight into what happens when we pay attention to those big rules**
- **For you to recognise the insane importance of understanding foot mechanics and the difference it can make to your work as a practitioner**
- **Answering the question:**
  - \* **How do I interpret the body better to get stronger results?**

Underlying all of that, I ask you to start to believe that change is truly possible and perhaps even step into my world for the period of time that you read this book and consider that change really does take only an instant to occur.

It's generally accepted that most pain can be resolved in about six weeks (I'm sure there are variations on that) and we are anchored to that thought. A broken bone takes six weeks – why do we imagine a muscle tear or back pain should take the same?

A six-week process to change isn't really a single change, it's millions of changes taking place on a small scale until you finally perceive that a change has been made in you. Except the type of change I am talking about is the quantum leap from the old to a new physical you...

**...from nought to six weeks in just 30 minutes!**

**Interestingly, on many occasions in discussion with a chiropractor about my work, I hear them say how very chiropractic my approach is... and in conversation with an osteopath how very osteopathic my method is...**

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It is my experience, on many occasions, that using movement as a tool for rehab has given so many things back to so many people; some claim to have their life back – many of them who had given up on ever being out of pain again. They literally came to me as a last resort and wished they'd found me earlier.

What's the difference between what I do and what they had experienced elsewhere? The difference lies in what I pay attention to and the lack of influence that the conventional model of anatomy has had on me. I'm not blinkered in my approach and never have been.

**If it didn't make sense to me, I didn't use it.**

I did countless courses that were simply a waste of money, that gave me things to look at, but no solution to offer my client or patient. Movement is still the only thing that makes sense to me. Even the anatomy book we all learn from doesn't make sense to me. If it is accurate, then it's limited in its accuracy and can be expanded on greatly, and yet it remains what we all learn from and use as our 'go to' tool for muscle and joint reference.

It's truly amazing what can happen when you take the raw state of the human body, uninfluenced by text books and old science, and just play with it to see what it can do.

**For me, it highlighted significantly different ideas and key concepts that challenge the status quo and impact upon everything from:**

- the way we stand to the way we move
- the way we exercise and develop strength and specific conditioning
- the way we can treat clients, receive treatment or even treat ourselves
- whether we choose to be stable or more mobile
- whether you can get out of pain or not

These new ideas and concepts began to come together to form my five big rules of motion, which I'll discuss in detail later.

After the trip, Oliver christened me the 'human horse whisperer' – a horse whisperer being a talented horseman with a remarkable gift for understanding horses, who is hired to nurse horses back to health. Except I do that with humans... and have been referred to as the 'human body whisperer' before now.

**UNLOCKING POTENTIAL**

Here follows some headings that summarise the approach I both use and teach AiM students to follow to get a result with the human body. Scan it, identify it, solve it... it's how we begin to unlock the hidden potential in every client we see and work with.

**● Scan it**

I watch the body in motion and gait, scanning the body, observing the movement of joints and body, reading for anomalies in muscle balance, stance and posture. I look for what is not happening and compare it to what should be happening.

**● Identify it**

I study the movement to recognise poor or failing

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SCAN



IDENTIFY



SOLVE



movement patterns so as to seek out and identify the cause of the patient's problem. Poor movement in one part of the skeleton impacts on the movement of the whole skeleton and can be visible from head to toe. I ask myself what movement or imbalance occurring somewhere else in the body could be causing that inhibition.

### ● Solve it

I use movement patterns, and/or exercises to replace the movement or movements that are not happening in the client's body. These have been mapped to the body over years of watching the body move, and using force and pressure plates to determine how movement occurs from the foot up the kinetic chain. I have developed a way to re-educate the body, to restore lost movement

patterns, which enable the body to function optimally once again. The movement pattern that is faulty (or missing) needs rewiring to the brain so the person can begin to use it again in a pain-free environment.

### ● Reset

It's like hitting the reset button on an electronic device so the body refreshes itself, starting again, pain free, mobile and raring to go. In fact, this is beyond giving new movement back to the human body. It's about allowing the body to access old movement patterns, the factory setting's default mode. Clearing the decks to start again.

In fact, it is my firm belief that every human body has unlimited potential locked away inside; inhibited possibly by three things:

**It's like hitting the reset button on an electronic device so the body refreshes itself, starting again, pain free, mobile and raring to go**

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- I. Poor skeletal alignment and posture
  - II. The internal workings of the body (organ function, hormonal imbalance)
  - III. Belief or mindset
- All of which could have arisen over the years as compensation for previous pain, from postural habit, emotional state, poor attitude to one's health and, of course, present pain or circumstance.

Do we understand pain? Do we respect it? Do we even respect the magical capabilities of the human body itself? I'm not sure en masse that we do.

**Let's look at it like this:**

***If your body is not as good as it can be then it's likely you will have problems at some time in your life.***

That much, I think, we all do understand. So if we flip that in reverse (I'll do a lot of that through the book you'll notice) then it becomes:

***As soon as your body is as good as it can be, you overcome these problems and create awesome opportunity for yourself.***

What I am suggesting is that as overall inhibitions are removed from your body, the overall potential of your body increases, too.

Let's use back pain as our analogy here, since it is the number one search term on Google for the health and fitness industry – notice that people do also seek fitness trainers to help with back pain.

Is this because back care is inadequate? No, it just means that people are always looking for more answers and consistently seeking alternative opinions about their predicament. Human beings thrive on choice. The predicament arises out of the

problem, which is, quite simply, that pain, under the current way of addressing it, is little more than manageable. We have the skill set to help people relieve pain, but do we have the skill set to eradicate that pain for ever? It's an interesting thought. I'd like to create that as a possibility for mankind.

What I am used to witnessing is that people who suffer from back pain can come right out of their pain **immediately** once the overall inhibition has been resolved.

Immediately? How can back pain be the number one search term on Google and therefore the biggest physical problem on the planet if an immediate turnaround is possible?

Quite simply, because it is. On the other side of the coin there is a solution to every problem, and I would like to reveal some of the methods I use throughout this book to give you a basic understanding of how that is possible. So that next time you have back pain and seek treatment, you might think twice about just getting a 'back rub' or a 'back crack' when in reality that could simply be a way of masking the situation in the short term. Next time you consider referring a client for treatment, consider that using movement correctly, as introduced in this book, you could offer a solution where others offer a mask. People need real answers to their pain and real solutions to overcoming performance inhibitions.

Have you ever noticed how every six weeks to three months patients are back at the local therapist with yet another bout of back pain? This is because the environment in which the pain arose has not been challenged or changed. By this I mean the skeletal alignment, the gait patterns, the thought processes

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around the pain and the system as a whole remains as it was the last time the pain was present.

It is because change hasn't really happened or even been addressed.

What if it really is as simple as finding the cause, locating the 'thing' that triggers it every day and restoring effective movement patterns to reduce and eliminate the triggers in order to unlock some of that hidden potential I am talking about?

In your body lies an unexplored point of maximum efficiency and optimality beyond which fantastic opportunity lies.

**This opportunity can be described as:**

- Physiological: a state of enhanced wellbeing, whether it's being pain free and playing with your children or experiencing life at a higher level than you ever thought possible.
- Physical: a perfectly vital body can achieve anything, sporting greatness or just greatness in your own mind. What's your wildest dream?
- Emotional: postural change has an instant carry over to the way you feel and many people remark on the impact that being out of pain has on their life, their family and relationships around them.

This point of maximum efficiency becomes accessible when we challenge the boundaries of what the body can do. There's a weird science, if you like, that makes it simple and easy to compare what goes on in the body to the very nature of how we manage ourselves in life as well.

## CHALLENGE

Have you ever noticed how life gets better when you

challenge yourself? When you go beyond your own perceived boundaries and self-imposed limitations there is an awareness of change, instant change and a knowing that there is no going back.

Imagine you have pain somewhere in the body. Now imagine that a separate body part simply doesn't work as it should and imagine that challenging and mobilising that part in a specific way means that change at the point of pain becomes a real possibility, with relief instantly brought to your discomfort.

Once you experience that, and feel it in your body, you have a knowing that there is a way out of your current predicament. And there is...

What would you do then? What if all of a sudden there was no pain? What dreams could you fulfil? What goals could you achieve? How different and much more positive would your life be? If you are thinking that you don't know or have run out of dreams or can't even imagine being out of pain, then you have to now seek movement as a tool because it is the one thing that nearly all practitioners and even trainers fail to use in the treatment of your pain. If you have tried everything, but not tried movement, and movement is as effective as I say it is – then what have you got to lose?

Now, as a therapist, consider that your clients feel like that, too... and the best most can offer them is pain management when pain resolution is a real possibility simply by adding new tools – the tool of movement – to your fantastic repertoire of skills. Would you be proud of your work if you knew that resolution was actually possible and yet management is what you are selling?

**What if it really is as simple as finding the cause, locating the 'thing' that triggers it every day and restoring effective movement patterns to reduce and eliminate the triggers in order to unlock some of that hidden potential I am talking about?**

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**Your body is  
being truly  
functional in its  
dysfunction!****MOBILITY**

One of my biggest fears has always been to lose mobility and as I explore more and more the simplicity of optimising human movement potential, I question how it can be that we are, in the main, happy to have our bodies operate with sub-standard performance.

Why do we accept our pain as the norm and forget to question things until the only possible solution is to be cut open and have parts removed or added to our already perfect body?

**You have all the parts you need, ladies and gentlemen!**

Yes, your body is perfect, even if you think it isn't. As I mentioned already, not many people truly respect the potential of the human body, including practitioners I speak to and teach. We are forever using the word 'dysfunctional' to describe a failing body. Yet your body is being truly functional in its dysfunction! We'll clear some definitions around this later.

Consistently, when this situation of accepting our pain as normal arises, nobody ever asks: "Have you tried using movement as a tool?" swiftly followed by: "Give your body a chance to heal itself. You didn't know that your own body knows best, did you?"

People are generally left asking the question: "What's happening to me?" and that is the question that I consider on a daily basis: "What is happening in your body that is causing your pain?"

My body knows best? Yup. Despite what your conscious mind is thinking right now, and I accept

that this might be difficult for some of you, but bear with me for now, OK?

Your body has an innate awareness that intuitively knows what it means to work efficiently and effortlessly. It knows how to be pain free if only you would **stop using it in the same way** day in day out and with every step you take. Seriously, changing your body to a more vital state could be the biggest habitual trait you will ever try to break. Harder than smoking. Worse than picking your nails. More debilitating than your need for a biscuit... Unless you get the right type of practitioner in place – one who asks the question "what is happening in your body that is causing your pain?" and understands how to start the process of self-healing or auto-correction, unlock the secrets and crack the code of the human body. Did I mention using movement?

That's what Oliver did. He found me. He paid for me to experience this magical round the world trip because, in Oliver's words, "he couldn't do it without me".

The truth, as he was finding out, is that, sadly, he could not have done it with conventional therapy backing his corner.

**MY STORY**

I'd like to wind back a bit further to my own story. A trainee teacher with a degree in Modern European Studies at Loughborough University, I spent my years at university gazing out of a window or with my head stuck in my mate's sports science manuals trying to work out how to do better in the gym, build great muscles and wow the ladies. I'd lost the desire to teach foreign languages to schoolchildren who barely even left their home town and thought France

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was a fictional land somewhere in the region of Timbuktu. I quit and headed to the Alps to pursue my love of skiing. During the six winters I spent in the French Alps, I was lucky enough to be taught to fit ski boots for a living and even more lucky to be introduced to the foot, how it works, how to fit it in a boot, how to build an orthotic for it, how to make it comfortable and pain free so as to maximise the ski experience of the person at the other end of the body.

I was hooked, instantly. I fell in love with feet and was instantly fascinated with the bodies of the people I worked with. Knee pain, hip pain, back pain: everyone who came in the door had something wrong with them! I remember thinking: "WHAT A BUSINESS!"

Knee pain? What if I adjust the foot in this way? Pain gone? Brilliant; go and enjoy yourself. This happened time and time again. WTF? I also noticed that I could shift pain around from one body part to another, leading me and the other ski boot fitters to question "what is and where is pain really?" We simply deduced it must be in their heads and carried on with our off-snow labour of love: ski boot fitting and ski sales.

Eventually it became too much, I had to learn more and the easiest and simplest way was to become a personal trainer and sports massage therapist. Upon my return to England to work full time in this business I was instantly disappointed with the standard of anatomical understanding in the body – in particular around feet and the phenomenal connection they have with the rest of the body. In fact, I figured people actually believe that the foot and the body are disconnected, like some metal bar sits between the two, separating them and

banning any thought processes that could link the two! There was only one thing to do: start teaching foot and posture workshops. So I did... Today I am lucky enough to teach all manner of fitness and therapy professionals and am constantly honoured by their delight in my approach and humbled by the results they themselves obtain with their clients. I'm passionately driven by the daily feedback I get from my practitioners of the awesome results they get with their clients where other therapists have failed.

This book comes at you with no doctorate, no degree, no background that marries up other than pure experience and practice of working with the human body using the foot as a pure access point to understanding it and determining its functionality. It's been an interesting journey, one that has been fraught with mistakes, errors, struggles and frustrations... but I got there in the end. Following my passion – firstly for skiing, and secondly for the human body – opened doors I hadn't even envisaged when I was sat there feet up staring out the window of Rutherford Hall, Loughborough University, whiling away time in a degree I would barely ever use.

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## CHAPTER 2: RANT, RANT, RANT!

**"Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please." Mark Twain (1835–1910)**

Before moving onto the five big rules I first would like to share some of my struggles and frustrations that may also ring a bell with you and your own frustrations. These are things that are prevalent in the businesses and ideologies of fitness and therapy professionals. It's a good time to remind yourself to park what you know and entertain the idea that what I am saying could have some validity and a significant role to play in the way you work with the human body in the future.

When I teach my courses, I get the students to stumble upon these concepts by themselves: that way they can't really disagree with them as they have simply discovered it for themselves. I don't want you just to accept what I am saying – I want you to go out and experience it, play with it yourself and see what happens. Most of all, challenge it and observe the outcomes. The reason I call them the five big rules is because rules are made to be broken and all progress relies on the breakdown and rebuilding of things. I consistently challenge the rules and as yet they remain intact, so I urge you to do the same – don't accept them, run them into the ground and see if they work all the time to serve the people of this world better.

If you finally decide to accept the five big rules, you will most likely notice that in movement, many of the strategies you employ readily in your day-to-day work actually don't carry any functionality or

specificity (two massive buzzwords) across to your client. Wouldn't that be frustrating?

I have 10 basic rants that seem to completely go against the grain of all that we are taught about the human body... and yet when I go against the grain in practice I see amazing transformative results... and so do my students.

### RANT #1: STATIC STRETCHING

My core statement here is simple: "Static stretching does NOT work!"

It's quite simple actually. I have not employed static stretching with a client for at least six years now. This MUST mean two things: 1) stretching is not necessary to get results; and 2) there must be a better way than stretching to get the type of results I am used to seeing. The problem, for me, lies in the term 'static'. I don't have a problem with stretching as long as we stretch a muscle in accordance with its true functionality.

#### Muscle function basics

In motion, all muscles work like so:

**OFF - ON - OFF - ON - OFF - ON - OFF - ON**

Never static – ever!

To hold a stretch deprives the muscle of the ON part of that relationship. A muscle lengthens to its end range (stretches), stabilises and contracts back to where it started again.



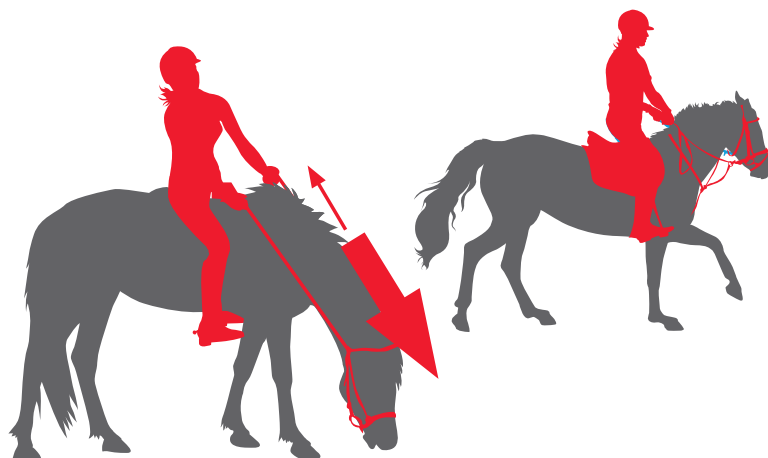
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The sensation you feel at the end of a stretch and the reason you can't stretch any further is because the muscle is actively contracting against you. It is defending itself from going too far by decelerating the journey towards end range.

At end range, the muscle has a need to contract back to its restful position, otherwise it will quickly become fatigued in its futile effort to do so.

In movement, muscles stretch to allow the skeleton to move. I call it the 'horse's head' analogy. Imagine you are on a horse, holding the reins, and the horse drops its head to the ground. You are the nervous



system that senses that motion and initiates a contraction on the reins to control the movement of the horse's head. If the horse was much stronger than you and placed its head on the floor to eat, and you maintained the effort of trying to get the head back up, you would tire yourself out. This is the case in a static stretch.

When it came to riding the horse minutes later, the horse would be ready to go and you would be knackered! This is how muscles feel in poor posture – knackered.

In dynamic movement, muscles BOTH lengthen and shorten, lengthen and shorten, off – on, off – on. By encouraging this pattern, the body naturally allows the short muscles to lengthen and the overstretched muscles to shorten as the body finds a natural state of balance.

Stretching simply addresses the inhibitions in muscle tone without addressing the state and balance of the body as a whole. In my second big rule of human movement, you will see why expecting a stretch to influence posture is a hopeful long shot at best.

**If the horse was much stronger than you and placed its head on the floor to eat, and you maintained the effort of trying to get the head back up, you would tire yourself out. This is the case in a static stretch**

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I hope you enjoyed the free chapter and the first of  
TEN informative rants; please visit the WTF website at

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