

Chapter 13: The Gospel of Stability: Relearning How to Move to Prevent Injury

Chapter 13 delves into the critical importance of maintaining physical fitness as we age, focusing on preventing injury through stability training. The chapter argues that a significant reason people reduce physical activity and experience decline in their later years is due to injuries that were never fully rehabilitated. Such injuries disrupt exercise routines and can lead to chronic pain and reduced physical capability. The author shares personal experiences and those of others to underscore how injuries have long-lasting impacts on physical activity levels and overall well-being.

The text emphasizes that stability is often overlooked in favor of aerobic fitness and strength but is crucial for preventing injury. It's not merely about having a strong core; stability encompasses the body's ability to control and resist force, ensuring movements are safe and efficient. Moreover, the author advocates for a shift in mindset regarding exercise: rather than pushing the body to its limits every workout, focus should be on cultivating safe movement patterns to minimize injury risk.

The chapter also introduces the concept of dynamic neuromuscular stabilization (DNS), which is based on mimicking the developmental movement patterns of infants. This approach suggests that relearning these natural movements can enhance stability and prevent injuries. DNS, along with other stability-focused exercises, forms the basis of a comprehensive program the author suggests for improving fitness and reducing the likelihood of injury.

Through the narrative of Barry, an elderly individual who transformed his physical health through stability training, the author illustrates the significant potential of targeted exercise to improve quality of life, even in advanced age. Barry's commitment to retraining his body allowed him to regain a level of fitness and mobility that he had not experienced in years, serving as a compelling example of the benefits of stability training.

Finally, the chapter conveys a powerful message: by addressing the stability of our bodies and relearning proper movement patterns, we can greatly enhance our physical capabilities and quality of life as we age. The lessons imparted underscore not just the importance of regular physical activity, but of approaching fitness with a focus on stability to prevent injury and maintain a high level of physical function into our later years.