The Really Slow Fix

6/22/2016

Corrective exercise should not be a rehearsal of outputs. Instead, it should represent challenging opportunities to manage mistakes on a functional level near the edge of ability.
(from one of Gray Cook's 10 Movement Principles)

In my practice, I get to watch people move. I see how they are able to achieve movement well or as spectacular conglomeration of compensations. Both are beautiful. If they seek me out because they want to make those spectacular compensations spectacular movements, they are quickly made aware that they will have to be an active participant. Then they find out how challenging "easy" movements can be. They become intimately aware of that sweet spot at the edge of ability. When they accept it and sit in that place for a moment, they realize that this is where the magic happens.

This magic place builds links between sensory inputs and motor outputs so that movement becomes truly functional. This is because real movement is not simply an action born of repetition. Real movement is the outcome of sensory input, having been interpreted by the nervous system and expressed as motion. Hopefully spectacular movement. When it is not, for a multitude of reasons, a person needs to earn it again.

To earn this, one must be placed in positions or patterns that are at the edge of ability. They have to struggle and shake a little as valuable sensory input allows the nervous system the wonderful opportunity to learn. This is often perceived as failure, and met with frustration. Yet it truly is between this ease and challenge, that a person finds the opportunity to get better. Earning movement like this is not often a quick fix, in fact it's more like a really slow frustrating fix. One person may earn a movement quickly while another devotes days, weeks or months to the same task. What is the same is that both will have truly earned that beautiful exchange between sensory input and motor output that translates into a spectacular pattern of movement very difficult to unlearn.