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How Can Myofascial Release (MFR) Help You?

by Frances Nicolais

Our last article explained how the fascia system works in our bodies.

"Fascia is very densely woven covering, which interpenetrates every muscle, bone, nerve, artery and vein as well as all of our internal organs including the heart, lungs, brain and spinal cord. The most interesting aspect of the fascial system is that it is not just a system of separate coverings. It is actually one structure that exists from head to foot without interruption. In this way you can begin to see that each part of the entire body is connected to every other part by the fascia, like the yarn in a sweater.

Fascia also plays an important role in the support of our bodies since it surrounds and attaches to all structures. These structures would not be able to provide the stability without the constant pull of the fascial system. In fact, our bones can be thought of as tent poles, which cannot support the structure without the constant support of the guide wires (or fascia) to keep an adequate amount of tension to allow the tent (or body) to remain upright with proper equilibrium." [from John F. Barnes, P.T.]

As you read this, you are probably wondering how Myofascial Release would apply to your personal situation. Let's start with your childhood and think back



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to the first injury you remember. Maybe it was a fall out of a tree. Maybe you tripped on something in the yard and fell head first onto the ground. Maybe you skinned your knee so bad it needed stitches. Any time our bodies suffer trauma of any kind, there is a momentary "freeze" response and our cells remember this trauma.

However, since we are very adaptable creatures, we don't stay in this "freeze" position of trauma or injury more than a second or two, and continue on with our lives. The freeze response from something like a fall from a tree, may have occurred as the child was upside-down, if that was the moment of impact. Now, that child's body has a cellular memory of that position of trauma, both physical and emotional.

Since the fascial system runs through every cell in our body, this pattern of cellular memory creates a very subtle shift in the body as a whole, possibly causing the child's head to twist slightly more to one side, maybe pulling one shoulder more toward the back of the body, etc. Since the damage to the fascial system can be subtle, the change is rarely noticed as a direct result of the injury and is most often ignored.

Then, from birth to present, every trauma or micro-trauma, whether physical or emotional, creates a cellular memory of the moment of injury and changes the fascial system throughout the entire body. This can create numerous systemic problems throughout our life, and are most often misdiagnosed and mistreated.

Most of our society is trained to go to a physician when there is a physical problem. The physician often "treats" the problem with medication and/or surgery, as this is the training provided in their field. They are not trained to look at the body as a whole, and thus, often miss very obvious patterns of dysfunction. A trained Myofascial Release therapist can not only see and feel the imbalances, but can actually show these to the patient themselves. The patient can then observe their dysfunctions and take an active role in their own healing, assisted by the Myofascial Release therapist.

If you would like to find a Myofascial Release Therapist in the Los Angeles area, please visit my website listed below. If you would like to find a Myofascial Release Therapist outside the Los Angeles area, please visit John F. Barnes, RPT's website: www.myofascialrelease.com and go to "therapists".

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