
Marc Perry: Hello everyone, this is Marc Perry from BuiltLean.com and I have a very special guest with me today, Cassidy Phillips.

Cassidy is a biomechanical specialist and Founder and CEO of Trigger Point Therapy. Once told he could never be an athlete again because of muscular dysfunction, Cassidy has become a pioneer of myofascial compression techniques and has helped people of all ages improve movement efficiency and restore muscle elasticity

In today's call we're going to talk a little bit more about what is myofascial release, why it's important, learn a little bit more about Cassidy and his Trigger Point Therapy products that he's developed, and then we'll tie it together with some practical application.

So first I want to say thank you very much, Cassidy, for joining me today.

Cassidy Phillips: Absolutely, I'm glad to be here Marc.

Marc Perry: Great, so I guess for starters, What is myofascial release?

Cassidy Phillips: Well, it's interesting, myofascial release and honestly, Trigger Point Therapy, are so widely used in the fitness industry now that it's really confusing as to what it really is.

What we defined from a company perspective is Trigger Point Performance therapy uses the foundation of trigger points. We're really looking at it from a performance basis, which can be tissue tolerance, fulcrums, levers, the efficiencies of movement, they can also be just performance in everyday life.

Myofascial release, once again, we've coined myofascial compression techniques, and that's where we build compression into the muscle but we take the distal limb through a range of motion and then we also take the divisive choice through range of motion as well, so that we really defrag any dysfunction that may exist in the muscle tissue itself.

Marc Perry: Ok, you talk about this muscle tissue dysfunction, what does that mean and how does myofascial release help?

Cassidy Phillips: Well one of the examples that I give everybody is if you never got dehydrated, you probably wouldn't have fascial dysfunction.

One of the big keys here is myofascial, you've got muscle and you've got fascia, somebody combined the two and said myofascial, but it's very difficult to move any of the fascia and/or muscle independent of one another.

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So what ultimately happens, based off of dehydration and the elements of life, the repetitive movement, the fascia and muscle bind together therefore inhibiting the muscle's ability to move efficiently.

So one of the exercises I typically tell people is if you take your hands and you put them about maybe a centimeter across from one another in front of the body, typically what you'll feel is the heat of the opposing hands. Now what happens is what we call the liquid force, that's the space that really needs to be in between the fascia, the muscle, and the skin. It's a very laymen's way of looking at it.

But then we say ok, take your hands, put them together and rub them together and as you rub your hands together, obviously, you feel that the hands actually heat up.

Now if you were to apply the sticking agent of fascia and the dehydration, the two together will ultimately turn your muscle more into beef jerky than a supple steak.

So the art of myofascial release or myofascial compression techniques, is to put the water back into the sponge so that you can have that pliability back again.

Marc Perry:

That's a really interesting way of putting it, and I think it's a great visual. So thanks for that. What's the difference between massage and myofascial release? Is a massage a type of myofascial release?

Cassidy Phillips:

Yea, Marc, it's pretty simple. Any time you touch the body, essentially, it can be a massage, right?

So myofascial release is a form of massage. There's a manual form of myofascial release and Rolfing and other techniques that are pretty tender to the touch. There's also a self-care component and that's what we've done, is we've created a line of products that mirror the feeling of an actual hand to allow you to really believe that you are getting a massage.

In the fitness industry, you cannot put hands on bodies. So what we ultimately try to do, and I think we've succeeded fairly well is we've made a product to mirror the feeling of an actual hand so when you shut your body, you're going to be able to get most of the benefits that you would as a hand would be touching you as well.

The deal is, is that you don't go to the dentist to brush your teeth. You go to a dentist to get the real work done. So if you can brush your teeth every day, we feel like you can take care of your body every day, and that's where the myofascial release comes into play.

Marc Perry:

Great, so I'm going to circle back a little bit more about the Trigger Point Therapy products in a second and exactly what they do. But before we do that, I was hoping you could go into a little bit more detail about trigger points and why they're important.

Cassidy Phillips:

Yea, I mean a trigger point is a modern day dyslexia for the muscle. There's no real clear term on what a trigger point is, it could be scar tissue, it could be adhesions, it could be fascial dysfunction, it could be muscle spindle dysfunction, some researchers did an incredible job at really dissecting what trigger points are and how trigger points refer pain all over your body.

Now, there are these set areas in your body that once you apply pressure to those areas, you feel a satellite trigger point and another area in your body. Now many of those are really muscle bellies and if you actually follow the track then you can actually see insertion origin, but I highly recommend your listeners to go pick up a book by Simon Travell.

Now, on a flip side of it, there are – there's a book called Anatomy Trains, and Anatomy Trains talks about the myofascial slings and lines that Thomas Meyers has come up with that really defines fascia and fascial movement. Now if you apply the concept of dehydration into a trigger point and/or fascia and/or muscle belly, the insertion and origin of muscles will ultimately be jeopardized when you apply weight distribution into the equation. And what I mean by that is, within the body, you have fulcrums and levers, and then you have muscles that really control those fulcrums and levels.

And if the tissue is dehydrated and cannot move, sure, a trigger point can exist within that muscle, but ultimately, the fibers, the inner fibers of the muscle are going to be that much more challenged when weight distribution is applied. So from a trigger

point performance perspective, we're going to look at all of those variables, we're not just going to look at the trigger point because all the muscles within the body are to act independent, yet as one. Yet based off of dehydration and repetitive movement, it's very difficult to isolate one muscle for any given period of time.

So what we do is, we address areas of the body that we feel house trigger points but ultimately house biomechanical dysfunction based off of the challenges of everyday life. Does that make sense?

Marc Perry: That makes a lot of sense. And I was actually thinking also about – when I was at the conference there were certain areas like the psoas, the front of the quad, those types of areas seem to be – seem to really be helpful as a focus, as opposed to other areas of the body.

Cassidy Phillips: Marc, one of the biggest things that I'm really pushing in the industry right now, and we're doing clinical trials on it, most of your listeners, much of the people that probably come to your blog, really say that they hold most of their stress in their upper back. Would that be a pretty good assumption?

Marc Perry: Sure.

Cassidy Phillips: Right. So with that, what ultimately ended up happening is, you end up holding stress within that area because of your biomechanics. Now the reality is once you lose functionality, the knees go forward, the body goes back, the pelvis tilts, and then you create these false fulcrums in your back and once you do that, then of course that upper back is going to be effected. But I challenge you in thinking that that is where you hold all of your stress, because the reality is if we change the word of stress to tension, where you hold all of your tension is in the Achilles heel. So if I clip your Achilles, it's inevitable, you're going to fall to the ground.

So I want to make sure that the muscles of the lower leg are able to function as optimally as possible so that you don't have to deal with the aches and pains of the upper back, because your biomechanics are going to be fully, 100 percent optimal.

Marc Perry: I hear your opinion on is the common postural challenges, if you're sitting in a desk every day, what are the types of things that you find are a problem and that can be rectified with the Trigger Point Therapy products?

Cassidy Phillips: Yea well first off, our trigger point performance products are not the end-all, be-all. You're going to have to put some effort in to the way you live in order to have our products be as optimal as possible. And what I mean by that is hydration, hydration is the key. If we can create the liquid force within the body, ultimately you're going to be able to move that much more freely, so there's products from Nathan called Catalyst or tablets called Noon that you can put into your water that will change your water into electrolytes, and I think most people need to be aware of what electrolytes can do for the body, it's really the oil for the engine.

But as we get into posture, when you sit, the biggest thing that I need to tell you, Marc, is if you can't breathe, you can't perform, nor can you recover. So if you're slouching over your desk, you're cutting off the diaphragm, you can't breathe, you can't perform, nor can you work or recover. So if we can get people sitting up straight, 90 degrees with the foot, 90 degrees with the knee, 90 degrees with the pelvis, ultimately we're going to be able to recover and perform when asked to at a much more efficient manner because the body's just going to allow it to do so.

Marc Perry: That's really interesting. And just a couple more things – in terms of hydration, do you have any suggestions as to what you think is the right amount of water or electrolytes to actually intake per day?

Cassidy Phillips: You know, everybody's different man, it's so hard to categorize everyone into one group. I live in Austin, it's 115 today.

You're going to have to get a lot of electrolytes into your body to make sure you're moving efficiently, so I really – I'm not a big fan of really telling people exactly what they need to do, other than our programming behind our products, but at the end of the day, hydration is a hidden – or dehydration is a hidden evil. I don't think people really understand how detrimental it is to your everyday life.

We can all remember a time where we got dehydrated in an athletic endeavor, but I want you to really challenge yourself and look at a mid-day, sitting in your office, 9 times out of 10, that's when you get dehydrated. And you really want to go to sleep and you grab coffee, but you really need electrolytes.

Marc Perry: Can you talk more about TPT products vs. Foam Rollers?

Cassidy Phillips: I mean the big thing that I want you is that a foam roller is a staple in a gym society, and I think as guys, women out there – I don't know that they have done this, but guys have always folded the back of our t-shirt and brushed our teeth with it, it was a last desperate attempt to make the pearlies seem whiter – you know, cleaning off the teeth.

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But the reality is, using a traditional foam roller is like brushing your teeth with your t-shirt. You're going to push the plaque around, but you're not really going to get the real work done.

Each of our trigger point products are made specifically for specific areas of the body, and more importantly, the programming that we've designed is to enable people and empower people to be able to take care of themselves much like a traditional therapist would. So the big thing there is, specific products for specific needs.

Now, Marc, I have to admit something – years ago we did make a foam roller. And that kind of contradicts what I've just said, but what we did with our foam roller is, I built channels into it and the channels that are in our grid, is what we call it, is to push blood and oxygen through the tissue as you roll through it. There's also different densities throughout the grid system so that we really feel like you're actually getting a real massage from a hand. It's hollowed out so we don't waste foam and there's a hard core on the inside so it won't break down.

I created environmentally friendly products so that you have to buy one foam roller in your life and it'll yield the return that you're looking for at any given time.

Marc Perry: Great. I think that's really helpful. I know you have an interesting story, and I was hoping you could go into your story and what inspired you to start Trigger Point Therapy.

Cassidy Phillips: Well, I was diagnosed with a dysfunction called fibromyalgia, years ago, and there was a fear I had MS, and so I used to be a pretty cocky guy, I liked to be the guy that would do things nobody else would do. I did stunts in Hollywood, I've jumped out of planes, I've done adventure races, I've done Ironmans, you name it. That really defined who and what I was.

It's still a piece of me of course, but I had to differentiate the difference between confidence and cockiness. And we all want to be around a confident person and we all hate the cocky person.

And once I was stripped down to nothing and had to rebuild myself, I had to realize that taking care of myself was the ultimate key, and God's given me this body to be able to move, I may have to take care of it more than anyone, but that's ok. If I do that, I'm going to be able to continue to do things that I love to do.

So I really would go to the mall and I'd look at people walk and I'd see how the biomechanical dysfunctions would take over someone that may not be active and then I'd multiply it times 100 and see what I was doing to my own body. And the biggest thing I realized is in order to take care of myself I ultimately have to rely on myself. If I rely on others, I'm really going to set myself up for failure.

So the creations of the products were out of absolutely 100 percent selfish needs. I created this company specifically for me and only me to be able to take care of myself for the rest of my life. Now the benefit is, I get to share the wealth of knowledge that I've gained over the last 10 years and spread it around the world.

We have classes in over 40 countries that empower people to be able to take care of themselves, and it also empowers trainers to be able to educate their clients on how to use our products in the most efficient manner. But the reality was, I was stripped down to nothing and rebuilt, and I became a Christian through the process and the reality there is I got a real Captain Crunch decoder to life. And I realize the important parts of life versus the egocentric thought process that I had years and years ago.

Marc Perry:

How long does it take for myofascial compression techniques to become less painful over time?

Cassidy Phillips:

Just like brushing your teeth for the first time, it was pretty painful. We typically pulled everything back to something that everyone can really relate to and if you ever went on a camping trip and didn't brush your teeth and the first day that you brushed them when you got back, it was a little painful, your gums may bleed but that really lasts for a very short period of time. It's this standardization of programming that's ultimately going to reduce the discomfort while using our products. So you brush your teeth every day, you should be taking care of your body every day. And if you really institute that into your thought process, the discomfort that you feel will go down dramatically in a very short period of time.

- Marc Perry:* Great. It seems like you are implying we should use myofascial compression every day...
- Cassidy Phillips:* Listen, if you only brush your teeth a couple times a week, that's a personal preference. I'm absolutely meaning, this is a daily process. If your hydration's right, if your nutrition's right, if you get manual massage every day, don't worry about it. Don't even think about myofascial release or products. But if you don't have the time or the money to be able to do that, this is the best hidden secret to be able to take care of your body on an everyday basis.
- Marc Perry:* That's very, very cool. I've been doing it for a while but I don't think I've been doing it enough, it seems like it's still pretty painful, whereas I have some friends who have done this for a long time and they say their pain level is like a 1 or 2 out of 10, whereas I think a lot of people who don't do it very much, it's like 7 or 8 out of 10.
- Cassidy Phillips:* We like to take pain and change it to discomfort. You're a good looking guy, you take care of your body, but you're taking care of your body from the inside out, or maybe from the outside in, but you have to tie the two worlds together and that compression is what's going to ultimately do that for you.
- Marc Perry:* Awesome, and so for someone interested in myofascial compression who's kind of new to it and new to TPT, how do you recommend they start? Is there a certain product you have with some education that you'd recommend, or how – what would you recommend?
- Cassidy Phillips:* Yea, the biggest thing we do is we give an education to everyone. We want to once again empower you to be able to take care of yourself, so if you go to our website, we've got a phenomenal amount of education, education about biomechanics, education about movement, education about how to use our products, so at www.TPtherapy.com you can go there and get some pretty awesome education. Now you can also go to our programming website, and that's www.therapy-x.com and that's where you can learn more about our programming, programming for sport performance conditioning, programming for aches and pains in various areas of your body, but we really – the biggest thing for us is we don't sell a product, we provide the education, and through that education, you can make the conscious decision, whether to purchase our products or not.

- Marc Perry:* That's perfect. So I think we've covered just about everything, I was hoping to cover – I'm just curious if there's anything else we did not touch upon that you would like to mention?
- Cassidy Phillips:* Lastly, Marc, I just want to kind of pull all this together by saying a confident body is a confident mind. And what we do is, we build confidence in every step you take. And you've been around confident people, you know you're attracted to confident people, so therefore why not be that confident person?
- And we hope that we can be a big part of people's success by having them understand when you have a bad day, you go out and you exercise, you don't go for the drink, don't go for the cigarette, don't go for the TV, don't go for the comfort foods – get out there and move around.
- And we like to say that we give purpose to movement. Every movement needs a purpose, and that's what we're going to do for those that choose to use our products.
- Marc Perry:* Listen Cassidy, I think we'll close with that. Again, I want to really thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to share insights and I think you made some very insightful and inspiring points. I need to come up with some great analogies like you, by the way.
- Cassidy Phillips:* *[Laughter]*. Well you know, it's part of who I am, I get made fun of every day, but at the end of the day it's part of my shtick.
- Marc Perry:* Awesome. No, I love it. Listen, again, I really, really appreciate it and I'll definitely keep you posted.
- Cassidy Phillips:* Ok, thanks man, I appreciate it.