

[00:00:00] **Tony Porreco:** Hello, this is Tony Porreco and this is the Mind and Body podcast series For seasons in our life. Seasons in our Life is a therapy practice dedicated to the wellbeing, healing, and self-improvement of individuals in Reston, Bethesda, and Washington DC led by Dr. Carlos Durana. Dr. Durana has been cited twice in Washingtonian Magazine, as amongst one of the most highly regarded practitioners in his field.

Dr. Durana has provided practical, integrative holistic services since the 1980s in acupuncture, manual therapy, Chinese herbal medicine, life and wellness, coaching, and counseling. Today's topic is complimentary sports medicine, acupuncture, manual therapy, trigger points, and dry needling. Dr. Durana, welcome to the podcast.

Good to be with you again, Tony. Thank you, doctor. So today's topic, complimentary sports, sports medicine. Tell us about it.

[00:00:51] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** Sure, I'd be glad to. You know, generally speaking, sports medicine relates to, uh, the prevention, the diagnosis and rehabilitation of, uh, sports or exercise related injuries, um, complimentary.

You can maybe refer to as comper and holistic sport sports medicine. It's, it's going beyond that in a way. It's not only, um, um, addressing, uh, the particular symptoms and so on, but it's going into, into the whole mind body connection as well. It, it's utilizing techniques, for example, uh, such as acupuncture, copying, uh, manual therapies or massage.

Yeah, but it also then focuses on, uh, you know, the factors, um, that also influence, uh, fitness, um, athletic performance, health and injury avoidance. For example, the whole mind body connection and, and the whole idea of lifestyle and how that influences. Uh, our health and, and this is seen even in, in modern sports medicine where you now see sports psychologists in, in just about, uh, all the good athletes who have one, and they will have an acupuncturist.

They will have, uh, they maybe using techniques like coping body work and so on. So it's, it's become more prevalent throughout and so. I tend to use, um, all of these, uh, types of practices, uh, the acupuncture, the body work, uh, or manual therapy, uh, and also paying a lot of attention to lifestyle, um, as a lifestyle, uh, coach to really, um, look at a person's habits, um, ways of coping and, um, um, and so on because, uh, you know, it is, it is really.

So by working on, um, on our coping styles in life and, and habits and so on, we can improve performance, we can improve, uh, um, our energy, our flexibility, and so on and so on. Now, another thing that I pay a lot of attention to is the structure of the body and through manual therapy. And this is really important in my opinion because, um.

The body structure has an influence on performance, uh, and we see that sometimes in, in postural problems, uh, that can create, you know, limitations and so on. And so I tend to integrate approaches that way, uh, in order to enhance flexibility, uh, energy, motivation, and so on. Let me perhaps, um, give you an example of, of, um, um, that maybe this would, will, will illustrate how, how I bring all these different approaches together.

Um, I started seeing an, an 80-year-old, uh, gentleman who plays tennis and, uh, he still works. He's active in life and initially he came to me because. Um, he was having a problem with insomnia and, and some anxiety, so I started treating him with acupuncture for that, and so I saw him for a little while and, and then he appeared a few months later and, uh, he wanted to work with me again, and so we were then, uh, going to see how we can help him.

With his performance and playing in tennis, he wanted to do a better job. You on playing? And one of the things that I noticed, uh, right away is in his posture, for example, his structure, his, uh, his right, his left, uh, foot and leg would go out to the left in a kind of a duck footed kind of position. So his, that leg was not really rooted as, as well as the other.

So he overused the right side and underused the left side as a result. And that originated through a, a knee injury on the left knee. Uh, and, um, and he was never given exercises to correct that. So there was that issue there. There was also an issue with the hips, uh, not being level, and even more important than any of this was the, as well as the.

Um, the kyphosis of the, of the hunching of the upper back and which caused the, the head to thrust forward. So he had some problems with neck pain as well, um, in addition to the back pain with, because of the hips and very tight pectorals, particularly on the right. I mean, he had a good serve, a strong serve, and the pecs on the right, uh, you know, could show that there was a lot of strength there.

But it was not flexible enough so he couldn't reach back, um, too far up with the arm, with a right arm to to, to head the ball.

[00:05:26] **Tony Porreco:** Did he show you his tennis

[00:05:28] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** techniques? Well, he did. Yeah, he did. Yeah. Yeah, he did. And so as I started, um, um, working with him, um, his, his structure starting to improve, uh, to the point where.

After many session. His, his, his, his leg now. And he was very surprised. You know, his foot was, was on his own coming back under him, you see. And that's very important because of his, um, um, he was overreliant so much on the right side. I. You see, and not using the other side as well. And so his serve got better because he became more, more flexible.

His PS became more flexible as well, so he had more strength in in the, in the serves he had, and he was quicker, which surprised him that if somebody, I. Another gentleman who was playing with him made a comment, what are you doing? You're, you're moving so fast, you shouldn't do that. You can't do that.

Because they were, they were losing to him. So, so he, he was very happy about that. Now, the other problem with his, uh, hunching, uh, as we worked on the pecs, um, with techniques, uh, of acupuncture and, and also with the manual therapy, his, his posture started to get better so that it has improved. I mean, I'm still seeing him now.

And it has improved. Maybe, uh, I don't know, 40% is, is in terms of his being straighter, you know, it's not quite there yet. And then the neck pain has pretty much gone at this point because of his ural improvement as well. So. And his energy, his quickness in the game, his flexibility, which really has surprised him because he never thought that he could do some of these things and be able to be more flexible in his back and his neck at this point in his life.

You know, also because of, of part of the issue of his posture and as we dialogue more in his anxiety and things like that, a lot of that had to do with protective mechanisms, you know, 'cause you know, the chest is one of the areas that we protect a lot, and we do that sometimes by tightening. The, the pecs, the pectoral muscles, you know?

And so, um, you see, that's a way that I bring in the, and some people, again, not in everybody, you know, particularly with, uh, um, complimentary sports medicine, how I bring in all of these different aspects in terms of, uh, um, um, the body structure, the. Uh, you know, the work by working with manual therapy, the acupuncture, and also the coaching part in terms of, uh, um, some

of his, I gave him some ideas in terms of his, um, to work with his anxiety in terms of coping internally, self-talk and all of that, but also.

Uh, in addition to that, uh, habits in terms of at night, in terms of, uh, improving sleep and, and how to help himself, uh, with that as well. Also, the last part is a little bit we're working on in terms of his nutrition because he wants to lose a little bit more weight, I think would be helpful and I think that would probably increase increases, uh, quickness even more.

[00:08:30] **Tony Porreco:** Do you feel like we've discussed the extent to which. Your approach differs from traditional sports medicine?

[00:08:38] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** I, I think so. I think we can say a little more about, uh, particularly this, this area of, uh, trigger points and dry needling, which has, is this is a, an approach that, that is fairly recent and now it's being used by some medical doctors and, and some physical therapists.

And, um, how we use that, it's, it, the context that we use that in is different. Trigger points, uh, were, uh, discovered by a, a, a doctor, a medical doctor, Janet Trove, um, in the last century. And she trigger points are like, um. Uh, palpable sources of pain and referral patterns that emanate from, from there. Uh, and she discovered that, uh, she outlined many of these points and she discovered that there was about a 92% correspondence between, um.

The trigger points and the acupuncture points. So this idea of, you know, the, the, the coining of the word trigger point, of course, is a modern concept, but in acupuncture for many, many, many, hundreds and thousands of years, um, there was this idea of the, what, what they call the, the painful point that. Ashy points.

Ouch point, because they're more painful than other points. And because they're, they have so much tension in them. And so, uh, and this idea also of what I call myofascial meridians or tracks, I. It's very interesting that, you know, she's talking about some things that were there already in, in, in, in acupuncture.

Now you see nowadays that, that being used like that just solely in terms of a trigger, trigger points or, you know, for sometimes in physical therapy, the way that we use 'em, we use 'em in the context of the whole person, not just in terms of the symptom. And that's the way that I use it because with, there are certain acupuncture points that will help in addition to those, say, um, points that then makes the sys, uh, the treatment much more, uh, holistic and better, uh, overall rounded.

So for example, there, there are acupuncture points that help with blood flow, that help with, um, energy flow, which then has, has an influence on those particular trigger points or pain points as well. You see, so it can be done in combination with these other accu, with the other acupuncture boys to, to have a better effect and a more holistic effect as a whole as well.

[00:11:06] **Tony Porreco:** Doctor, earlier you mentioned the concept of body awareness. Could you say more about that?

[00:11:12] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** Uh, sure.

[00:11:13] **Tony Porreco:** Um,

[00:11:14] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** in, in, in the life coaching that I do, uh, part of it is, is, is teaching people about the mind body connection, how to pay attention to your body and the signals of the body sending you. Uh, because if we pay attention to the body, we can use it as a resource instead of what we're using, the body and so on.

So I use a, an approach, I call it body talk or body dialogue, uh, as a way of teaching someone how to, uh, not only paying attention more to the body, but also have a, have a relationship to the body where you can. In a sense, dialogue. I mean, you're really dialoging with yourself. It's not just your body, but, uh, so that then you can get information in terms of, because the bo it's also the body stresses, the things that it's holding because the body will hold, um, emotional tension patterns.

The body and the mind and the emotions reflect one another. Okay. And so you can tune into the body to pay attention to, uh, how we are responding or how we coping. Our life and with our stresses because the body will store these things as well. So this is another source of information that's really important to tap into in the same way that we can talk about how a person copes, how a person's thinking about how they deal with certain stressor in their li in their lives.

'cause ultimately it stress is out here, but it's really how we cope with what's out there. That's causing the stress ultimately. Right. So by isolating, you know, the triggers and then how we're coping. Sometimes if we're coping with a stressor in a certain way, let's say, where we are getting, uh, we usually using certain thought distortions like, uh, catastrophizing sometimes about something that is occurring or will occur, uh, that is not so effective in terms of coping.

That will be, we're wasting our energy in a way. So in the same way that we can identify the, the stressors, we can identify the responses and the triggers and all of that and teach skills in that realm. We can do the same with the body and see the places that are holding, uh, large amounts of tension that.

Also are, are, are taken away energy because those tensions are, could be useful energy in a way, right? And, and so we can I then dialogue with those aspects of our body, you know, to acquire information as to what's going on there. Why is that there? What are the, those reservoirs that are, um, holding so much energy when that energy could be used for other.

Purposes, you know, now we can, we can learn to relax those areas. Like for example, in yoga there's a technique called body scan where you go through the body, uh, using breathing to relax different parts of the body. But, but this is going beyond that because we can relax those areas in the body. But why do they keep reoccurring?

You see, sometimes they're a result of, uh, body structure problems, right? But sometimes they have to do with, um, storage places where we are holding stresses. You see? And we can resolve that. We can learn techniques in terms of how do we, through body awareness and, and dialoguing with one cell on how to, um, understand that.

Then resolve that.

[00:14:46] **Tony Porreco:** Dr. Durana. So else can you discuss about your approach that you use in your practice?

[00:14:54] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** Sure. Um, well, for example, nutrition is an important, uh, an important factor. You wanna make sure that how people are eating, you know, it's what they're eating. Sufficient or enough, or good enough or, or is it problematic, you know, creating problems in terms of energy and, and blood sugar issues and so on.

So paying attention to that is very important. Another thing that, um, that, that I do with people and, and, and going back to that case example that I had earlier, um, I do. Pay attention a great deal to exercises and things that people can do on their own to improve these issues. And so with him and going back to him, uh, I, I showed him a number of exercises to, to improve his, uh, his structure, his posture, and to increase flexibility and so on as well, and strength, very specific things.

And so I will do that as well as part of, um. As part of the, uh, the approach that I take.

[00:15:56] **Tony Porreco:** That's really interesting stuff, doctor.

[00:16:00] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** A, a, a final point, um, is internal exercise, and this is more, uh, of course this is Chinese, uh, medicine base. And what is internal exercise? Well, we're talking about practices that were known now as Qigong or Tai Chi.

And in the Chico or Tai Chi, if you, if you look at it, um, and this has been around for, for, for a long time, thousands, a couple of thousand years probably. Um, uh, very fluid, fluid, fluid motions that are being done right. Very slow, very meditative. Okay. Now there's an importance to that. Something that you get from that, that you do not get from, let's say.

Strength training or just flexibility training like say yoga or something else like that, which are all wonderful, right? They're all wonderful. Or even cardio. Uh, this has to do with flow and what flow does psychologically is different from what you might get from strength training, you know, which might give you more sense of confidence and so on.

Um, you know, this ability to flow in life. You know, uh, sometimes we need that psychologically we need that. Uh, it's like a river, you know, the water is flowing around a rock. It doesn't necessarily go through it. You see, it's a way of adapting that's different in terms of instead of forcing something, you're yielding, going around it.

That's a, uh, type of exercise. You see that. That helps you develop that when you do it in that way. Does that make sense?

[00:17:38] **Tony Porreco:** Yes, it does.

[00:17:39] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** Yeah. So, uh, and sometimes then I will teach people, uh, some of these practices, uh, depending on what they're needing as well, because it's a way of being more fluid. That way.

[00:17:52] **Tony Porreco:** That is so interesting. Dr. Durana, thank you again for joining us today. If you'd like any other information on this topic or anything else, please go to seasons in our life.com. Thanks again, Dr. Durana. I'm Tony Porreco. Thanks for listening.

[00:18:05] **Dr. Carlos Durana:** Thank you for having me. A pleasure.