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MUSCLE IN
An innovative technique blends exercise and massage to ease aches and pains

By SANDRA GUZMAN

You know those body aches and stiff joints that keep you up at night or greet you first thing in the morning? It could be that it’s not just age. You might have a case of sleeping muscles. And, thanks to a revolutionary technique known as Muscle Activation Technique (M.A.T.) you can wake up the sluggish muscles and live pain free.

Gregory Gordon, a trainer at Clay Fitness Center in Union Square, is one of a handful of experts in the City trained in the innovative method which, until a few years ago, was only available to professional athletes.

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and check for imbalances. Then, through a series of targeted assessments that feel like a deep tissue massage, he kneads the muscles which have gone to sleep, giving them a series of jolts that reactive them one by one until the entire area is aligned.

This therapy is complemented by rigorous and targeted workout aimed at strengthening weak areas.

“What I do is give people ownership of their body again,” says the Brooklynite of his training method.

If those words sound a bit grandiose, try talking to 48-year old Michael Lotito, who lived with a recurrent backache for over a decade until he began training with Gordon three years ago.

“It’s remarkable — night and day — how I feel,” says Lotito. “I’m almost afraid to let the secret out,” he says.

[Gordon] figured out that my back pain was due to my weak hip muscles,” says Lotito. “And by reactivating the muscles connected to my hip then focusing on the strengthening those muscles my back pain is almost gone.”

The Upper West Side advertising executive says that he has also experienced an added benefit: his golf game has improved dramatically. “I can get an extra 40 yards on each shot,” he says.

M.A.T. was developed about a decade ago by Greg Roskopf, then Denver Bronco’s coach and an expert in biomechanics. He was searching for ways to heal pro athletes who had traumatized their muscles.

The technique has gained popularity with fitness buffs looking for ways to reduce injury during workouts and for those seeking pain relief.

Clay, the fitness center where Gordon trains, has offered the innovative service since it opened six years ago.

The success of M.A.T. doesn’t end with relieving back pain. It has been used by people looking to recover quicker after surgery, to treat sciatica, herniated disk injuries, degenerative joint diseases and even carpal tunnel syndrome. Some claim the technique can slow or even reverse the aging process.

“Our theoretical, it makes sense that this would work. You need to have all your muscles working together — awake and flexible — doing their job to live pain free,” says Lotito. M.A.T. sessions start at $250 for non-members. Clay is at 25 West 14th St. (212) 206-9200; insideclay.com