

Alexander Technique

Vocabulary/Concepts
How they relate to hypermobility

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Attention - Thinking and attending to your movement. Your thinking has an immediate effect on your body and your movement. Thinking is not always verbal.

Bracing -

- Commonly understood meaning: muscular holding that occurs to potentially stabilize the body. It can put more stress and pressure on the joints and connective tissue.
- In the HDS/EDS community this refers to the use of assist devices, e.g. compression garments, silver finger-splints.

Choice - Having different options to choose from in one's thinking and movement.

Comorbidities - two or more conditions that occur together; They may each be common in their own right and therefore appear together often. Sometimes a direct link between them can be established.

Counter Direction - Movement and flow always goes in two directions. e.g. up and down, in and out, side to side.

Direction - Flow and movement through the body. Also giving oneself "directions" e.g. self talk and thinking.

Dynamic Balance - System that allows for easy and fluid accommodation of movement through ease and available movements in the joints.

Elasticity -

- For muscle/tendon units in non-affected tissues (e.g. EDS) the property of elasticity allows tissue to return to pre-stretched state. In lax affected tissues this may not be the case.
- For ligaments: once ligaments are stretched they do not return. Hence stretching near a joint is contra-indicated for all. Joint integrity can be compromised.

GRF Rebound - Return of the gravitational force up through the body. Feeling the ground and the consequent upward force that leads to suspension and support throughout the body.

Habit - Consistent and familiar response to stimulus. Patterns of how one uses their body.

Heritable disorders Of connective tissue (HDCT) are conditions caused by changes to genes that build our connective tissues, which are passed down from parent to child. (Smith pg. 18)

Hypermobility - Normally, the composition of connective tissue ensures that ligaments are just tight enough, muscles tone just strong enough and the sockets just deep and well formed enough to ensure joints are stable and are restricted only to 'normal' ranges of motion, Such stability prevents joint injury. Variations in one or more of these structures, (. e.g. connective tissue that is more easily stretched than usual, sockets that are shallow in formation, or muscle tone that is poor) can all result in a greater than average range of motion in the joint(s) being possible - this is described as 'joint hypermobility.' (Smith pg. 17)

Inhibition - Ability to pause in a thought and/or movement to consider other options and choices of how to proceed.

Kinesiophobia - An excessive and irrational fear of movement and physical activity (wrongly) assumed to cause re-injury i.e. the belief that painful activity can result in damage and can increase pain, suffering and or functional loss. (Smith pg. 142)

Leaning - Sitting into the joints. This has the potential to create more laxity in the ligaments and connective tissue.

Posture/Alignment - Relationship of the parts of the body to each other.

Prolapse - In medicine **prolapse** is a condition where organs, such as the uterus, fall down or slip out of place. It is used for organs protruding through the vagina or the rectum or for the misalignment of the valves of the heart. (wikipedia)

Proprioception - The unconscious perception of movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body itself. In humans, these stimuli are detected by nerves within the body itself, as well as by the semicircular canals of the inner ear. (dictionary.com)

It is perhaps not surprising then, that those with conditions such as hEDS or HSD, whose connective tissue lacks tensility, and whose feedback-producing tissues (that surround the joints, tendons, ligaments, muscle, fascia and blood vessels) stretch every time a joint slips or dislocates, should be affected by [creates] proprioceptive dysfunction. (Smith pg. 58)

Releasing - Letting go of muscular tension. It is important that the release resolves and goes into a direction and flow. One does not release into a puddle on the floor.

Resistance or lack thereof - Interference of movement by structure or tension OR lack of interference to movement.

Symptom - What the patient is experiencing, and may indicate a condition or disease. (Smith pg. 40)

Syndrome - A group of symptoms which consistently occur together; at least one of which is thought to be causally related.

Suspension - Three dimensional support where there is appropriate distribution of pressure throughout the system.

Tensegrity - Concept of suspension as applied to the body where bones are spacer/struts and ligaments, tendons and muscles are guidewires that hold the body together. A Buckminster Fuller word that is a combination of "Tension" and "Integrity".

Throughness - The lack of resistance that allows for direct pathways through the body to the gravitational force. There is no interference in the body that blocks this flow.