

# JASON McPHERSON

CSCS- Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist thru NSCA (National Strength And Conditioning Association)

TSCC- Twist Sport Coach Certified (TWIST Conditioning)

CPT- Certified Personal Trainer thru ACE (American Council on Exercise)

Owner/Partner of Sledbarrow Inc.

416.817.3909

[Jason@sledbarrow.com](mailto:Jason@sledbarrow.com)

[www.sledbarrow.com](http://www.sledbarrow.com)

## PASSIONATE, DEDICATED, PROFESSIONAL

### QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

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**Besides your innovative fitness tools, how is it that you bring an element of empowering difference to the industry?**

Knowledge is 'power'. What I request of all my trainees before I take them on as clients is a willingness to learn. I don't want individuals who want to turn off their brains during their workouts.

If people can better understand the factors that contribute to their current state....they can better AFFECT a change, whether it be weight loss/gain, health concerns, joint dysfunction, lifestyle changes etc.

I do both small groups (mainly young athletes) and one on one training (all populations). Reason being, I find the younger the client, the more willingness to learn and the fact that they possess less "bad habits". With regards to 'one on one', I find it more effective teaching new concepts and/or neuromuscular firing patterns in a small controlled setting. Because effectively assessing individuals in a group and individually programming them as a result is nearly impossible, as each person will possess different asymmetries and have different lifestyle habits contributing to their current state.

I come from a background of TEAM Athletics at the Collegiate level, and from that came many 'bad habits' and subsequent chronic injuries because of the lack of one on one teaching.

And from those past experiences, I have felt a desire to pass on good, up to date information so both our youth and general population does not fall into the same pitfalls as myself and can better distinguish between the good and bad information out there in infomercials and 'off the rack' magazines.

I was naturally 'athletic' so I needed to become book smart so I knew.... why I was able to do the things I could do naturally and further understand to micro progress people thru levels/challenges that I otherwise might have been able to do naturally.

**When it comes to individuals dealing with widespread joint distress, how do you recommend they go about a level of 'functional' training without further injuring themselves?**

With a proper assessment both a physical and discussion about lifestyle and prior training/activity/medical diagnosis (such as MRI, x-rays, diagnostic testing etc) I can tailor programming around such dysfunctions. I'm looking at alleviating the "pain/discomfort" from the joint(s) through either mobility, stability, or both.

If it's a group setting I can provide alternative movement patterns or exercises that can either ISOLATE to attack the deficiency or work around the area so a proper healing time can occur. Then prescribe 'homework' for the individual(s) to do on their own at home.

During 'one on one' training I am afforded the ability to isolate the affected area, and also educate and train the area/joint usually one above/below the area.

Being a practitioner affords me the ability to use techniques or practices to treat dysfunctions based on sound principles. And until you can try and then measure the results over time, can you really understand if one technique may work over another for different people. Not everyone will respond to the same technique(s).

What many people don't realize is how much their "lifestyle" affects their health. If I get 2 or 3 hours a week to work with people then people have 23 hours per day to reverse the positive work we are doing. So, who do you think will affect more change.... 1 hour or 23 hours per day.

What we might find out is that an everyday activity or flawed movement pattern might be contributing heavily to their progress. And through recognition, they will fundamentally be in a better position to change it. And this would only come out by educating the individual what is correct 'firing' patterns or movement skills even at its' lowest level. It's these low level activities that are 'chronic' in nature.

## **Most important advice you would give to another trainer?**

The most important advice I would give a trainer is...I think Michael Boyle said it best, A trainer should stay 'in the box'. There are too many people out there watching 'You Tube' videos and trying both creative but CRAZY things with their clients. What I mean is this...Keep it simple 'KISS". Master the box first before you venture outside the box. Read as much as you can to learn how we as humans, 'functionally' move. And with every client, this may be slightly different approach or that each client may have different requirements of what they are training for. Do a proper assessment first!

## **What do you think of some of those extreme weight-loss T.V. shows and other related programs?**

As far as "Extreme weight loss TV Shows" are concerned I find them very ineffective. They portray a vision that health is based solely on weight and desire to be skinny. Health is not being skinny because there are many people out there who are skinny who are not healthy. They are not strong. They do not necessarily have a healthy diet. They still may have a debilitating disease. What these shows should stress is that 'lifestyle' is the key, from handling stress, sleeping appropriate amounts of hours, having a healthy eating plan for life and increased activity levels comprised of the 3 L's (Load, Limber, Lengthen)

## **Do you believe in bootcamp training?**

I believe as in anything, any style of training has its place. There is no 1 way or method that will work forever or for everybody. It depends on the Health Practitioner to establish what the goals are of the individual whether it be healthy weight loss, healthy weight gain, mobility/stability joint training, combatting a health concern or disease, sport specificity etc.

Bootcamp training is good for 2 main reasons in my opinion. One being it has a knack of getting people to start a training regimen who otherwise may be too shy to participate in a one on one setting. Number 2, is that it has a metabolic conditioning component so it can help individuals start a cardiovascular routine. The downside is that it is hard to teach and monitor proper adherence to neuromuscular movement patterns and that the volume of exercise may not be appropriate to everyone in the class. Therefore, plateaus are immanent.

## **Do you see yourself training in 5 years/ in what capacity?**

Yes I see myself training in 5 years. The Health and Wellness industry is my passion. And our World needs a change in what we perceive as 'lifestyle'. With syndrome X looming (children born after the year 2000 NOT outliving the generation before it), we need to make a difference, especially in our youth!

I own a fitness product development company that creates from conception of an idea, manufacturing, marketing, distribution and all the way to healthcare professionals/end consumer. However, I will never stop being a practitioner. As a developer, it is essential to test my theories by actually using the products on myself and clients with tested measures. Just because it's in a text book doesn't mean it will always work for everyone. I'm not here to sell a product that is the "Be All and End All". That doesn't exist. What I am saying here is, educating healthcare professionals/consumers that there are MANY factors to consider when considering a change to their LIFE and expose the misinformation we see on television today.

### **What is the biggest challenge facing you as a trainer?**

The biggest challenge facing me as a trainer is misinformation. There are a whole host of ways that people are receiving bad information from the internet, magazines, news, pharmaceutical companies, government or even healthcare Clinicians and Practitioners. Yes, there is a huge mountain to overcome with respect to misinformation, but I'm up to the challenge with my Team of Practitioners who believe in similar views to the industry. I am a Strength and Conditioning Specialist and a Sport Coach Specialist as well as a personal trainer and product developer, however, those are designations I CAN show as experience. But rest assured, I am an avid reader of Spine Rehabilitation, Human Kinematics and Biomechanics, Corrective Exercises etc. And what I cannot do or legally diagnose, I have at my disposal a team of medical practitioners who can, to get my clients back to 'Functionally' living again.

### **Do you believe it possible for an individual to achieve 'strength' without actually lifting weights?**

Of course, people can achieve 'strength' without lifting weights. There are many forms of strength, some of which are strength endurance, relative strength, maximal strength or even strength as it relates to power. At the end of the day, much of this relates to the capabilities of an individual starting a strength program. All of us need a certain amount of strength to perform everyday activities. And these everyday activities are different for all of us. For example, it could be picking up and putting down your child throughout the day. And not having enough strength endurance throughout the day can lead to faulty movement patterns thus creating little micro traumas which, in turn lead to chronic injuries. I haven't even talked about muscular strength asymmetries as it relates to left and right side of the body. Let's go back to my last example of a mom, dad or caregiver, picking up and putting down a child throughout the day, day after day, week after week (I think you see where I'm going with this). For those of us with children, we realize we have tendencies to use the same side of our body or that our children prefer one side or the other. This volume of training will cause muscular imbalances. And these muscular imbalances can create mobility imbalances, as well as, placing stress on the next joint above or below the area or joint(s) being trained. So, to get back to the original question, body weight training is a great way to achieve baseline strength programs.

## **Greatest mistake most trainers make?**

The greatest mistake most trainers make is...that they feel they don't need to learn anymore. Yes, some of the information out there is bad, but a lot of it is good. There will always be two sides to every study and not everyone will agree. It's up to us as Healthcare Practitioners to read and learn and take with us what we believe is true based on past experience or other information we have read. We are the professionals, whatever that really means. But, it is our responsibility to keep informed about the latest information out there whether it contradicts our current beliefs. Don't be afraid to say "I was wrong based on this" or "I don't know, but I will find out". Don't over reach your abilities or scope of practice, for the sake of your ego. It will hurt us ALL in the industry if you do. Use the abilities of others in the Health and Wellness industry to help your clients. They will appreciate you are looking out for their best interest. That way we ALL win.

## **Do you believe in weight training for children, if so how do you proceed and if not, what do you recommend?**

What do we constitute as a child and by weight training? I like to create subgroups with children, as there exists a huge difference between a 6 year old and 13 year old. The differences are mental maturation, physical characteristics, ability to follow instructions or maybe in some instances has puberty begun. When I train children I take into account Biological age (age as it relates to health and maturity) vs Chronological (which is your actual DOB) . And create subgroups such as 6-9 "Guided Discovery", 10-13 "Learning Exploration" and 14+ "Train with Application". At the end of the day, children need to be stimulated to keep their attention and focus. It must not feel like work to them but rather play with rules. As far as weight training, I will focus on energy systems so equipment is little. Things like medicine balls, elastics, cones, hurdles, jump ropes etc. All of these you would find in a Physical Education Class.

## **What is the greatest change you have made in your given routines in the past 2 years?**

Let me answer it in this way...I would NEVER give a client an exercise or routine I wasn't comfortable doing myself. The number one thing a Healthcare Practitioner is responsible for is to keep your client SAFE. If clients are going too hard at the onset, they are bound to get injured. You need to have a proper assessment to create programs around that individual client and to progress them based on sound strength training principles. On a side note, the Healthcare Practitioner should be aware what EXACTLY the client is doing away from the gym so, as to ascertain the correct volume of work being done both inside and outside the facility. Many of my clients do other things such as rock climb, or Muay Thai or play for a sport. All of these can contribute to overtraining if care is not taken. The worst thing that can happen is that a client can be progressing week after week, month after month and then have a setback such as an injury or lack of motivation. Both of which can be a sign of over training syndrome.

**How is it exactly that training makes you a stronger person in your day to day life?**

Training makes me stronger in my day to day life in a variety of ways. One, I possess the energy and strength to 'hang' with my children. Working out doesn't crush me for the rest of the day or week. It works the other way. It affords me more energy to tackle the day, no matter what it is. I am almost 40 years old (Chronologically), however if you were to test my hormones, physical characteristics, cardiovascular abilities, mental state, stress levels, etc., I am like a 25 year old. My joints don't ache. I don't complain of back discomfort. My blood work is impeccable. I am just in great shape both outside and more importantly INSIDE. It's not just the work I do at the gym, but rather a 'lifestyle' that affords me Optimal Health.

## **WORDS TO LIVE BY...**

*“ Risk versus Reward ”*