



Indoor Training for Outdoor Activities

Heighten Performance and Prevent Injury through Mind-Body Fitness

By the Merrithew Health and Fitness™ Team

A Canadian summer is sadly far too short and even though we may not necessarily want to exercise outdoors anymore, winter sports enthusiasts are ready to bundle up and get active in the snow. To switch up the demands of extreme, outdoor activity, give your clients variety with a plan that uses mindful movement to improve and balance out intense activity while also preventing injury.

Mindful Modalities for Strength and Endurance

Even professional athletes, including NHL players and Olympic skiers, know that mindful movement will enhance their ability to perform optimally while also reducing their risk of injury. Avid athletes put a fair amount of strain on their joints and muscles. Aside from typical resistance and cardio training, opting to give the body a chance to recuperate with alternative forms of exercise that build strength, flexibility and endurance, will prove beneficial for winter athletes.



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“Mind-body exercise is a key component to athletic conditioning because its variety of modalities tend to focus on the deeper muscle groups, or 'local' stabilizers.”

mindful practice such as yoga or pilates will focus on progressing stability, stamina and resilience—traits that will help them boost their performance.

Mindful Modalities for Enhancing Performance

Mind-body exercise is also incorporating newer fitness practices such as core-integrated bodyweight training and functional fitness which help to enhance performance by improving total-body strength and power. The range of mind-body modalities can support any fitness professional's toolkit. Workshops such as the STOTT PILATES® Athletic Conditioning series or workshops from CORE™ Athletic Conditioning and Performance Training™ cover athletic conditioning, balance and strength and even distance running and plyometric training, perfect to complement any pre-existing mind-body training you may already have.

Using a tool like the unique Halo® Trainer can progress the difficulty of basic exercises for functional strength and stability, advancing clients to their desired fitness level. With its multi-functional and three-dimensional construction, providing overall body conditioning that incorporates strength and endurance work, flexibility training, interval training and injury prevention are made accessible through this single accessory.

Also, many basic body-weight training moves such as split squats and pistol squats are great for snowboarders, and alternatively, exercises that place emphasis on opening the hip flexors, such as butterfly stretches and pigeon poses are fantastic for skiers.

Mindful Modalities for Injury Prevention

Many of the principles behind mind-body exercise are well-aligned with those of rehabilitation. For those clients who want to prevent injury or are ready to return to the game after an injury, rehab and post-rehab education will put you in demand as a trainer. Specialty workshops through STOTT PILATES like Optimization of the Shoulder Complex, Optimization of the Lumbo-Pelvic Region or The Knee: Stability & Function, will position you to work with exercisers and athletes who suffer with these common injuries.

Mind-body exercise is a key component to athletic conditioning because its variety of modalities tend to focus on the deeper muscle groups, or 'local' stabilizers. This is key when controlling joint movement and in sustaining the stability of the joints that can often be damaged through repetitive and high demand training.

With its focus on a controlled lengthening of the muscles, mindful movement can be beneficial in assisting overall flexibility (lower back, hamstrings, and shoulders) and this can help to create a stronger game on the ice, on the slopes, or whatever your client's winter sport of choice is.



Merrithew Health & Fitness™ (MH&F) is a leader in mindful movement with high-end programming including STOTT PILATES®, ZEN-GA™, CORE™ Athletic Conditioning & Performance Training™, Total Barre™ and Halo® Training. Backed by 25 years of experience and the latest findings in exercise science, MH&F's philosophy is to deliver safe, responsible and effective exercise for people of all ages and levels of fitness.

Mind-body exercise can assist with relieving stiffness and pressure built up from these hardcore sports. A workout like yoga or pilates is perfect for exercisers to tone it down and relax, encouraging the mind and body to work together in tandem. Emphasis should be placed on:

- **Breath and Flow**—these will prove beneficial for unwinding and attaining a state of presence, something easily forgotten during intense activities.

- **Core Stability**—core abdominal strength benefits nearly every pose, improving balance and offering better ease of movement. Outside of your practice, a strong core will help support the lower-back.

- **Flexibility**—lengthen tight muscles regularly and clients can look forward to seeing and feeling an improvement in movement.

The increase in demand on the neuromuscular system will afford the benefits of improved strength and the sculpting of a more resilient and fluid body—qualities that every individual can physically enjoy, no matter their activity of choice. Especially useful for athletes looking to achieve goals and results beyond the casual exerciser, a