

The Art of Anchor Point Training

by Chris Severs

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1/ Overview

Anchor Point Training is defined by one end of an exercise tool being fixed while the other end is moved. This course will consider suspension and elastic resistance however other tools like land mines, battle ropes and cable machines can all be better understood using this overview.

From an effectiveness POV the most important benefits of Anchor Point Training are the ability to create massive amounts of useful variety and the ability to design resistance for training specific needs. This approach to training is also very convenient, the equipment is portable and useful anywhere there is a safe anchor.



What specifically differentiates this training from most other approaches is the ability to connect in different ways with different types of resistance in many different dimensions.

There are three main “external” elements that define how the forces created by any specific movement will be experienced by the body.

The three elements are: the location of the anchor point, the connection to the resistance, and the orientation to the anchor point.

These three basic elements are the external locus/pivot points that define how the forces will be experienced by the body through any range of motion.

Anchor points are used to create a vector of resistance. Different tools can be attached at different anchor locations to provide different vectors of resistance.

The resistance created at the anchor point can be provided by a rigid strap or cord which will mean gravity and body weight, possibly leveraged, will be the resistance that is going to be worked with.

The rigid strap or cord can be fixed or it can have a connection at the anchor point, like a slide or a pulley, that provides reciprocation of the connections .

Elastic resistance bands can be anchored at different heights to create vectors of useful resistance for a wide variety of movements.

There are many different qualities, lengths and strengths of resistance bands to work with.



When using an anchor point the safest bands to work with are covered. The safety issue is significant with anchor point training and elastic resistance as the positions of the anchored bands in many cases will orient the lines of resistance so an uncovered band that breaks can snap back around the face. Covered bands are also going to last much longer.

The rigid strap and the elastic band create different types of work. The rigid suspension strap creates work with gravity and the movement of body weight leveraged in relation to the anchor point. Elastic resistance bands require moving the connection to the resistance band away from the anchor point to create a vector of progressive resistance.

These two different types of resistance create very different movement requirements with tremendous variety inherent in each.

2/ The Nature of Anchor Points

Whether the anchor is a single point or two or more points and where these anchor points are positioned, is the fundamental starting point that effects how resistance will be experienced through a range of motion.

Creating the appropriate anchor point (s) is key to designing the specific vector of resistance required for different needs.

Elastic resistance configured with vertically organized anchors can be arranged to provide resistance to upward or downward movements.

Two or more anchor points can be used with elastic resistance. Multiple anchor points can add resistance force as well as spread the resistance anchor points out. These multiple lines of resistance can create greater resistance and more dimensions of resistance.

These capabilities offer the potential of creating more versatile resistance for movements, better training of specific needs, more variety and a more time effective practice.

The choices for suspension are more straightforward and revolve around two things.

First having an overhead anchor will provide everything a vertical anchor can provide plus the added benefit of being able to get directly beneath the anchor for full body weight work.

The second choice possible with suspension is whether the anchor point is a single point or two points. Clearly two points, usually shoulder width apart, will change the lines of resistance, the single anchor for suspension is very versatile and convenient, arguably a wider anchor set up for suspension will create different lines of resistance depending on how they are positioned.

Having an anchor system that provides versatility



maximizes the potential of the work that can be done. Regardless this type of training is so versatile that a single solid anchor point is more than sufficient for a great workout.

A solution as simple as strap with stopper will turn any doorway into a full range of vertical anchor points. Every gym has weight machines or racks that are capable of anchoring bands at different levels. Every playground has equipment that can provide a variety of safe useful anchor points.

THE ability to create resistance in any direction from an anchored point allows the creation of resistance to train virtually any movement.

The freedom of movement created by the choices offered by multidimensional vectors of resistance allows athletes to more effectively train the many specific movements in their sport.

Having these capabilities provides ability to optimize work effectiveness with variety and ability to train in functional dimensions.



3/ Safe Training with Anchor Points

Working safely with anchor points is not complicated, make no mistake however, a poorly connected anchor point, damaged equipment or an unstable anchor is very dangerous.

Every practice has some Golden Rules for safety.

Check the stability of the anchor.

Check the equipment attaching to the anchor point.

Check the connection between the anchor and the tool.

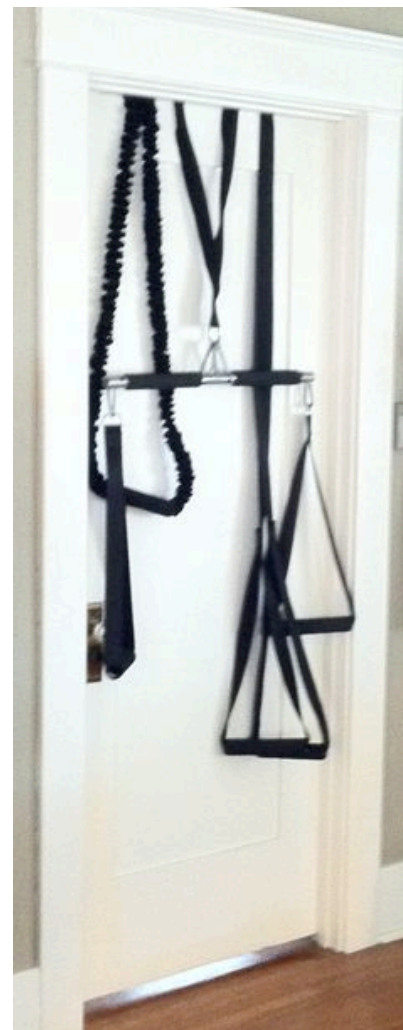
Anchors and equipment should be inspected and tested before use.

If you are using a door anchor, use with the entire door frame to support the load, in other words work with the door opening away from you.

Avoid using a door anchor with the door opening towards you as in this situation all the resistance is going to be supported by the door latch, even if the door is locked to deter an accidental opening it can still let go.

If you have no choice but to work on the side the door opens towards place the anchor close to the hinge side. This will reduce the amount of resistance that the latch will be taking and this is less dangerous, this is not ideal and should be tested.

Most doors are going to work well, but some are ill fitting and may not be appropriate for anchoring to from either side for a number of reasons.



This versatile practice is very accessible, but it does require common sense to be safe.

An anchor failure can be a very dangerous thing.



Field side be wary of using moveable soccer goal posts, soccer goal posts that are not bolted down, can be tipped over, while low anchoring of these pieces is no problem, overhead anchoring can cause the entire goal to tip over and this type of accident is dangerous and has even been fatal.

Permanently installed goal posts of all sorts generally make excellent anchor points. Most playground apparatus can be anchored to safely and virtual any angle of work can be created with anchor point training tools in any playground.



Another aspect of safety is footing, there are significant horizontal forces in play with APT, training on slippery surfaces can be dangerous.

The more extreme the angles used for suspension and the more resistance used when working with elastics the more important footing becomes, some floors and certainly wet grass will be much more difficult to train on and can be dangerous.

4/ The Nature of Leveraged Body Weight

“Distance is resistance” is a fundamental notion with APT. With leveraged body weight, distance is resistance, applies to how far the feet are from the anchor.

The closer the feet are to the anchor the more body weight is leveraged. This is a very simple way to scale the amount of resistance.

Positioning the feet to manage the mechanical aspects of leverage in different ways allows you to scale the amount of resistance of every movement.

It's a great idea to have clients use less resistance to establish the good plank and learn good form with a movement and then let them experience how adjusting their foot position, changes the resistance.

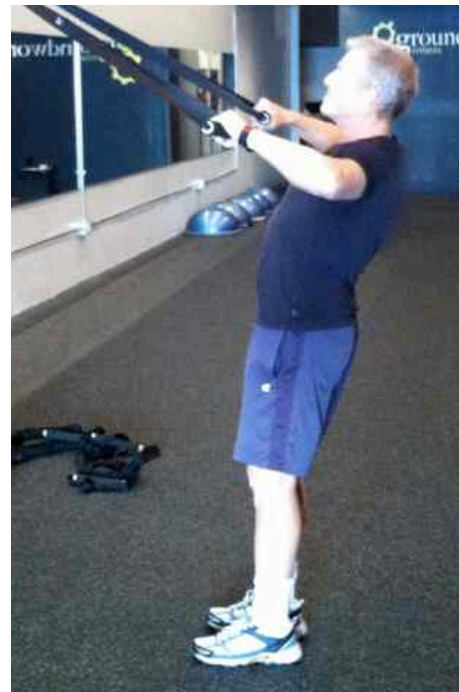
Some movements can be extremely challenging, ensuring the feet are appropriately positioned, moving the distance the feet are from the anchor, will allow even the most unconditioned beginner an opportunity to experience the neuromuscular demands of any exercise.

Be mindful of how the feet are positioned as well, narrow or wide and the angles vis a vis the anchor will also effect the challenge and how the resistance will be experienced.

Working directly under an anchor point is a challenging way to train that can offer versatile full body weight and assisted body weight work with useful connections to all limbs.

When the anchor point is overhead the height of the handles will influence the amount of resistance been used.

Lower handles will make for more challenging

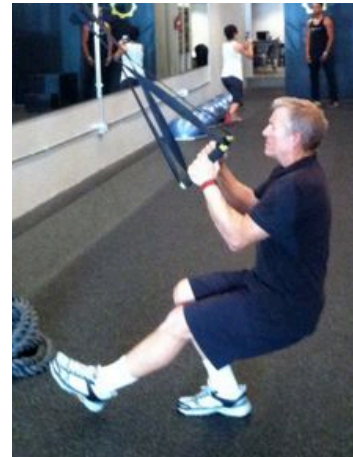
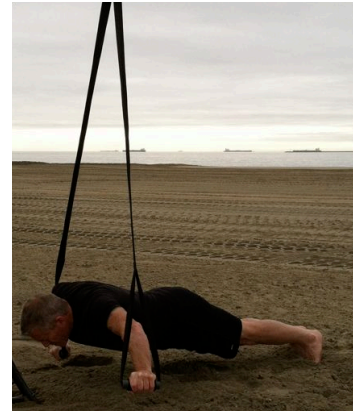


push ups and rows and higher handles will provide more challenge when the feet are put in the straps.

When training full body weight with an over head anchor the height of the handles can also provide versatility offering weight assistance and stability for different moves like squats and lunges.

In the case of an overhead anchor the user can get directly underneath the anchor point and this position offers unique opportunities.

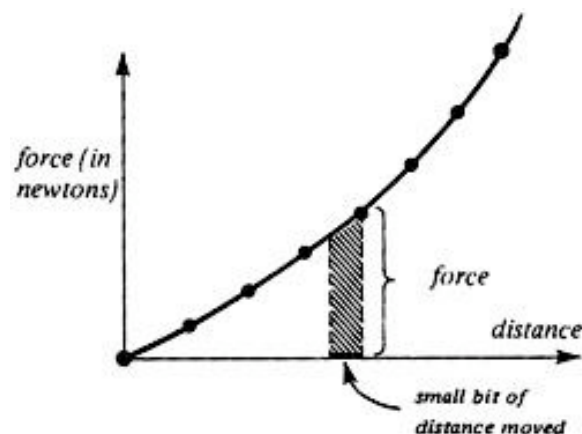
Regardless of whether the anchor is overhead or attached to a vertical point the stability of having the suspension handles is useful for both single leg training for experts or assisting seniors to be more confident working with two legged squats and lunges.



5/ - The Nature of Elastic Resistance

The force of elastic resistance increases as the band is stretched. When one end of the elastic resistance band is anchored the resistance gets progressively stronger as the users connection point with the resistance band is moved away from the anchored point.

This movement creates a vector of progressive resistance between the anchored point of the resistance band and the connection point that gets stronger as the resistance band is stretched between these points.



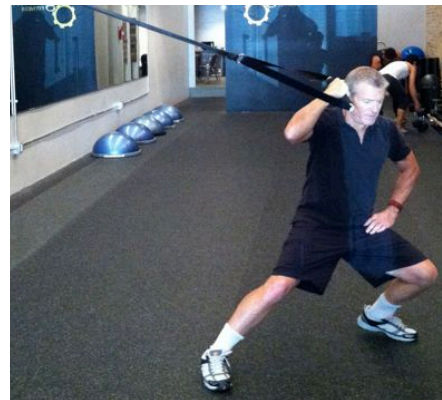
When working with Progressive Vectors Resistance any point along a range of motion can be trained with controllable amounts of force simply by changing the distance between the connection point and the anchor point. The ease of changing resistance is a useful component of variety.

The continual increase in resistance also means movements away from the anchor don't carry momentum and thus plyometric moves are effective and safer because they don't carry momentum, these plyometric capabilities can be very useful for training sports specific movements.



The continual increase in resistance also means isometric exercises can be developed that effectively provide precise resistance and angle changes by simply changing the distance and orientation to the anchor point(s).

The increase in resistance force over distance also means additional resistance can be created at the end of a concentric movement by using body weight or other techniques to move the connection point further away from the anchor point to create more eccentric resistance.

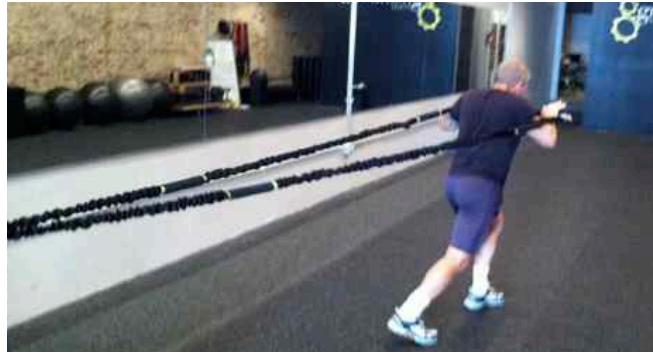


Simply moving away from the anchor at the end of the concentric contraction provides a higher work load for the eccentric contraction, a time effective way to add more dimensions of useful variety.

The rate change in elastic resistance depends on the length of the band. The longer the band, the more gradual the change in the resistance.

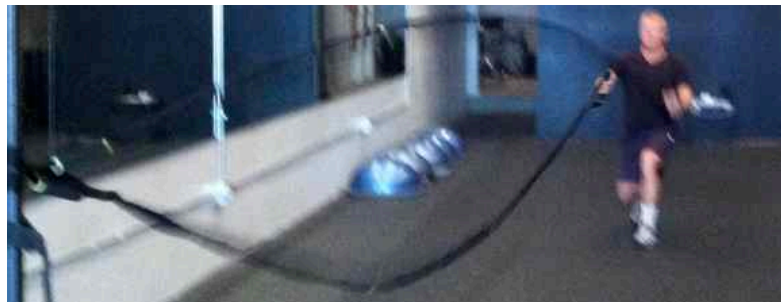
The longer band also has more useful resistances to work with and a longer range of useful resistances simply a superior tool.

Another aspect of working with elastic resistance is the return, this part of the work is also best done under control. While there is useful work to be done with overspeed it is always important to be mindful of the strength of the stretched band and ensure movements are controlled through all phases. Understanding the nature of progressive resistance is essential to safely progress it's capabilities.



A unique aspect of a long resistance band is the ability to oscillate it in different directions, somewhat similar to a battle rope. Using oscillation with the long band allows the resistance to create a very demanding variable resistance in many useful dimensions.

This ability to create a force that changes through oscillation will evolve into a host of useful new approaches for a variety of needs.



6/ Creating Useful Connections

How the force being anchored is connected to the user is fundamental to how the work being done is experienced by the body.

The forces involved in any movement will relate to the anchor point, the tool and the connection to the tool, and the body's orientation to the anchor point.

The CONNECTION to the tool is a fundamental fulcrum point in ANY movement.

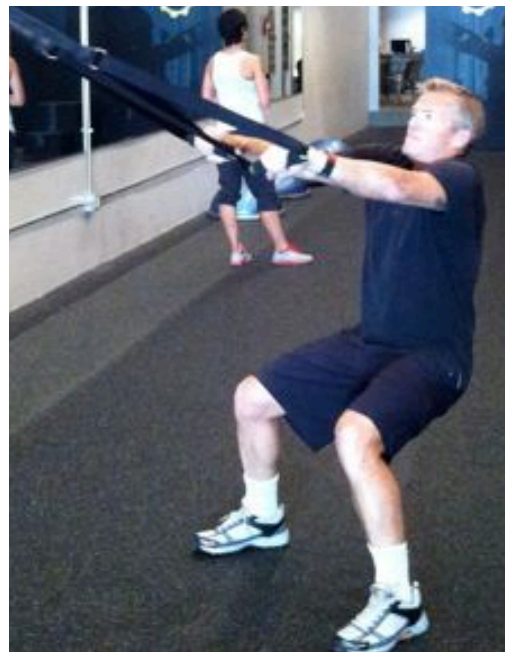
When considering handles, many aspects can change how the work is experienced. For example, larger or smaller grips or using no grip change how the work is experienced. When moving resistance through any range of motion the orientation of the handle/hand will change how the body works as will changing the angle of the handle itself.

A variety of rowing motions is a useful way to demonstrate how the versatility of connection can be used. The different ways of moving forces along a similar path create useful, accessible variety to maintain a high work rate and demands in different useful dimensions.

Consider in the first instance, this row from a high anchor with elastic resistance. The position of the hands, whether the hands are oriented through the row in an underhand, overhand, or facing position will change how the work is done in subtle but significant ways. Changing the orientation of the hands during the movement is another way to create new useful work.

Further subtle changes to how the work is done can be made by simply adjusting the angle of the handle in any of these orientations.

There are useful alternatives to handles for different types of work. Simple straps can be used to replace a gripped connection. Wrapping around the wrist or other body parts in different ways will provide different capabilities and resistances.



The strap around the wrist is useful for several things. It is useful creating a non prehensile connection for rowing. The approach of not using grip to connect with resistance is also particularly useful for assisted stretching and different shoulder rehab exercises.

Looping a strap around limbs the shoulders or at different points creates an extensive variety of other possibilities as well.

Here you can see direct connection ideas, one facing away from the anchor with one shoulder resisted working scapular retractions.

The most common use of long resistance bands to date has been for pulling work. There are several different ways to connect the body to the resistance for this type of work, the differences are worth examining.

The simplest connection is a belt. The first consideration, a very key thing with any belt, is how does it close. There are many designs on the market that use plastic buckle connectors that squeeze on the sides or some models that rely on velcro. These closure designs in particular can let go suddenly and can be dangerous.

It is important to ensure the belt closure has no chance of letting go while being pulled in different directions.

The second element to consider with a belt is the connection to the anchor point itself.



The connection between the resistance and the belt will determine how the belt can be used to create different pulling angles. Some belt designs have two connection points and these points will create a different resistance for rotation, others are designed with single connection point that can slide around. This belt design is going to provide more versatility when it comes to changing direction.



One big advantage of using a belt rather than a harness is the belt offers more freedom of movement to the upper body for additional work involving the arms.

The pulling forces in play are clearly different with a belt, the leverage created by a lower connection to the force on the body means body position pulling with a belt is going to be different from the leverage exerted by the same amount of resistance when using a harness with a higher connection point.



The higher connection point using a harness means the body needs to lean forward more to move the same amount of resistance and this means there are more forces being exerted through the core from the resistance being created.

The higher connection point of a harness also means that the leverage is greater. How quickly the resistance changes depends not just on how far the connection is from the anchor point but also on the leverage determined by where the resistance is connected to the body.



Staying fully in control of the force is always important. This leverage effect means when using a harness the resistance can change significantly and quickly when simply standing up. This can cause loss of balance with potential injury resulting.

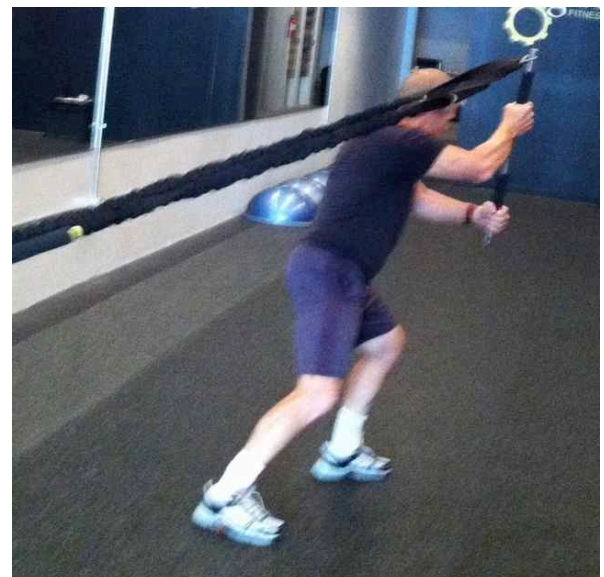
Pulling work is typically done with significant amounts of resistance, the mechanical leverage effect of the connection to the body relative to the connection to the ground is a fundamental element that needs to be understood to be controlled safely and worked with effectively.

It is also possible to create a similar higher connection point on the body by looping a pulling belt over just one shoulder. This will require much of the same forward lean that a harness does and is a useful way to create variety. A belt looped over one shoulder, is a simple way to create asymmetric core work when pulling resistance this way. This type of single shoulder harnessed pulling can be nicely finished with a lungeing “serape” torso twist.



The idea of using a bar or handle with elastic resistance attached at one end has become a growing part of the anchor point training vocabulary of exercises. In every range of motion, from every anchor point height, the use of asymmetric resistance introduces an element of leverage into the resistance being moved.

Hand position along the bar is fundamental, small changes can create



significant differences in how the resistance is experienced.

Hands closer together will increase the resistance, hands closer to the connection will reduce the resistance.

Hand position and positioning which end the force is on is a more obvious way to change the work through a similar range of motion.

Working with an over hand or under hand grip or using a combination are simple ways to create different useful demands.

Another fundamental element that can change how a rip tool works is the length of the tool itself.

A tool the length of a hockey stick is going to be more challenging to control and create more resistance when moved through a similar range of motion than the typical 4 foot device used for most rip work.

A shorter rip tool provides opportunity to do functional range of motion work for sports like baseball and tennis by making the resistance easier to control.

A rip tool that can be used with one hand creates opportunity for developing wrist and swing strength for sports like tennis and boxing.



The idea that movement is leverage becomes evident quickly.

Understanding the different capabilities when using a handle or asymmetrically resisted bar in terms of leverage and hand position is fundamental to working with useful angles and controlling the amount of resistance being worked with.

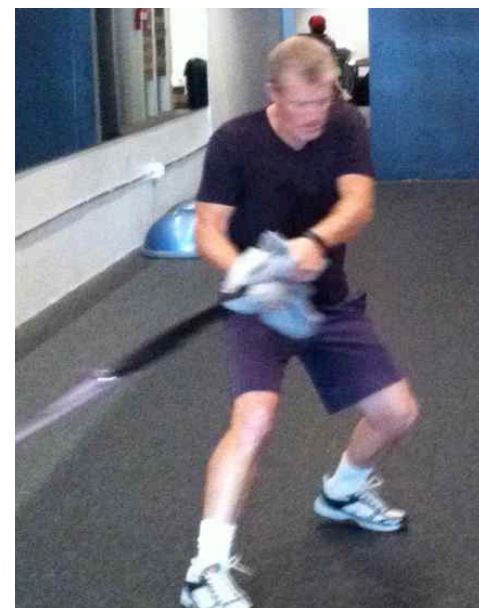
The connection can be employed in many creative ways when designing work for a variety of demands.

The versatility of the strength and direction of anchored elastic resistance means that functional dimensions of resistance can be connected to specialty tools that create different kinds of useful connections to the versatile resistance to serve specific needs.

Prehensile demands can be created with a variety of fabrics. A strap tool has been designed to create a resisted football .

Many different ankle, foot and wrist straps exist, in each of these how the connection piece is designed, the type of connection and where the connection point(s) are located will determine how useful the connection tool will be to resist any specific range of motion.

Attaching or looping straps at different points along legs and arms is also useful for creating the most



appropriate connection point for specific demands or useful variety. An approach to concussion prevention has been developed that uses resistance around the head to strengthen the neck. The evidence on concussions show that neck stability can significantly improve resilience to concussion by reducing the whiplash effect .

The training technique involves connecting around the head with a strap and then, while keeping the head and neck in a neutral position, lunging away from the



anchor to increase the load. Working either reps this way or creating an isometric hold, both are useful

7/ Orientation to the Anchor

Orientation essentially refers to stance. This is the last element in the equation of the summation of forces when working with anchored resistance.

How you are connected to the ground through the connection to the force and the anchor determine how the resistance, through any range of motion, will be experienced.

For the most part with anchor point



training the “stance” is about training resistance while standing upright.

The safe, effective static standing stance can be best described as athletic, knees bent, core engaged, shoulders down and relaxed.

The feet can be positioned from wide to narrow, being either the same distance from the anchor, square stance, or staggered in a lunge stance.

Clearly the stance can orient the body in any direction.

When working rows and presses it is possible to work with more resistance from a lunged stance and from this position resistance can be worked bilaterally and in contra and ipso lateral patterns.

Changing the orientation of the stance is a simple way to create more useful variety to the resistance and a factor that is easy to control and fundamental to the design of the work.

Changing orientation of the feet not only creates significantly different demands it also creates or restricts ROM in different exercises.

Changes to stance are a simple way to progress an exercise.

Moving from a wider to a narrower stance or changing to a single leg stance are useful ways to progress the challenge of a static



square stance.

Always consider how you can alter orientation and stance to organize the resistance in useful ways.

Mastering upper body movement patterns using a variety of static stances is a good way to offer beginners variety quickly and prepare them for progression to co-ordinated movement patterns.

Orientation can be dynamic involving squats, lunges or steps in any direction.

Dynamic moves can be very sport specific, done to train a football tackle or a wrestling takedown, a boxer's punches or a soccer kick.

Working with dynamic stances can introduce cardio conditioning into APT.

Using dynamic moves is fundamental to creating the most effective anchor point training work with anchored elastic resistance.

The longer bands are particularly useful for moving resistance through longer ranges of motion.

Dynamic stances can change the direction of the resistance and or add resistance to the movement.

The changes of resistance experienced when moving away from the anchor is a feature of elastic resistance that can be well used many ways.



First the distance of the stance from the anchor point controls how much resistance will be experienced, this is a simple way to create precise resistance.

Secondly the increase in resistance, the adding of load by moving away from the anchor can be used to create additional load for training eccentric movements. One that is simple to demonstrate is the curl. Something close to a 1 Rep Max curl is done and then , with the cur locked in at the top, the resistance is increased by either lunging or stepping away. The curl is then released slowly and a good eccentric rep is created.

A third approach is creating an isometric hold and then moving away to add load to this hold, this approach is well used in a concussion prevention protocol.

When the anchor points are high or low the distance from the anchor also effects the angles of resistance from the anchor point to the connection as well.

The longer the distance the less the angle of resistance. Conversely training closer to the anchor increases the angle of the high or low anchor.

Combining upper and lower body work is a very useful approach.

Once clients have mastered the basic plank row and press then lunges forward and back are the next progression, after this side lunges and then complexes.



Squats can be progressed in several ways on two legs and then be progressed to one leg.

Dynamic moves are a simple progression once clients have mastered the basic upper body move.

This is an opportunity to up the work rate of an exercise, to give clients more /different intensity.



Dynamic moves with suspension can integrate upper and lower body training in functional movement patterns and can provide all kinds of useful progression possibilities.

Moving away from the anchor with lunges or leaning while stretching with straps is fundamental to using the equipment well.

This aspect of stretching practice helps you appreciate how different orientations change the forces.



One of the really useful features of Suspension is that it provides a stability aid for doing squats.

Non athletic people, seniors who are more challenged with balance can move more confidently through a series of squat variations when they have the handles to help stabilize.

Pressing and rowing from one leg, doing alternate reps or being asymmetric in many regards in stance can create additional useful demands, in more ranges of motion and provide useful variety.

Generally people, seniors in particular, don't like getting down on the ground. That being said changing levels, working off your feet significantly changes how the forces move through the body.

Getting off your feet can provide additional challenge and useful variety.

Many exercises are more challenging from a kneeling position. The cross body rip or wood chop is a great example of an exercise that can really light up the core when done on one knee.

Another useful variation of Palof press is done from the knees. Whether on one knee or two training this move from these orientations increases the degree of difficulty as more work is done by the core when the legs are taken out of play.

Stability equipment can add useful interesting challenges to APT. These devices can create useful new challenges for feet or hands.

Sitting on a ball or kneeling on unstable surfaces can be well used.

There are so many interesting “stability” devices that can be incorporated into “orientation”, purposeful variety as always with all of them.

8/ Pressing Variations

For years the gold standard for training pressing strength has been the bench press, it's understood now that only about 30% of functional pressing strength from a standing position comes from the chest, the other 70% is legs and core.

Working pressing variations from a standing position is a great way to create a high work rate by integrating the whole body to train pressing, arguably far more functional for the demands of sports and life

Working from different anchor positions adds



useful variety to the movement, working with the High/Low anchor offers more useful dimensions of resistance dimensions to the work.

It is generally advisable to start every movement with some resistance and always advisable to control the resistance throughout the movement.

There is good advantage using the controlled return of any movement to create more useful work, there are ways to use body weight to load up additional resistance for the eccentric portion of presses and fly movements.

Working closer to the low anchor point will offer more vertical resistance.

Pressing away from a mid anchor point creates a whole new set of dimensional demands, everything in the body is oriented to pressing the resistance forward. This type of pressing from the mid level anchor point becomes far more dependent on legs and a stable core.

Pressing down from a high anchor offers clearly different dimensions of resistance capable of creating fresh demands for a similar range of motion.

Anchoring one end of a resistance band high and the other low and pressing the midpoint offers resistance for all pressing ranges of motion, upward, straight ahead and downward, all from one configuration.

When using anchored elastic resistance the connection point can move through many



dimensions while maintaining consistent useful resistance. Presses do not have to be straight lines, the connection point being pressed can be cycled in different directions to stimulate demands in more dimensions.

The body's orientation to the anchor point also determines the angles of force being pressed.

The orientation to the anchor can be changed by moving the feet around until moving the same connection point away from the anchor point becomes more of a cross body fly, this is one way to work a range of motion more thoroughly, working gradually through a similar range of motion from different angles.

Working presses with different hand positions from alternate stances, working unilaterally and bilaterally, using different rates of work in different dimensions are all useful variety.

Moving away from the anchor with a lunge or steps while pressing can create new demands for strength and stability.

Contra lateral variations are helpful with gait, ipso lateral variations can be sport specific for strikes and tackles. These many variations are used to train resisted pressing in all dimensions from any position.

The push up is a classic exercise, 100s of variations exist. When suspension is added the possibilities expand tremendously.

The classic women's push up position, the half plank from the knees is not necessary exist with suspension.



One of the great advantages of training pushing with suspension is the amount of body weight is completely scalable.

This means that less conditioned clients can train suspended push ups in full plank.

These less conditioned clients can also access most all the interesting variations as well by simply scaling the resistance by moving their feet further from the anchor.

With more variety accessible all clients can progress more effectively by training with resistances in more ranges of motion.

Working bilaterally, independently and unilaterally from different stances offers more opportunities to train pressing strength and core stability in more dimensions.

Moving the handles of a suspension tool while doing presses provides versatile resistance.

The orientation of the hands can be changed in a straight pressing movement and the press can become a fly movement by simply moving the hands out wider.

Moving hands wide “around the clock” is a useful way to create more dimensions of useful resistance.

Clients can also progress a a variety of leg work. Moves like lunges, knee raises or working from a single leg are challenging variations that can be made more approachable



when using less resistance and using the suspension as a balance aid.

More experienced users can progress into more challenging patterns using an overhead anchor.

9/ Rowing Variations

When using an overhead anchor the height of the handles will determine the amount of resistance being trained with

Any anchor height can be useful for rowing with Elastic resistance.

Anchored bands can be rowed in many dimensions as well, the pulling movements do not always need to be linear.

Different hand positions can be used to change the work as well as different connections to the resistance, non prehensile rows can be trained with a strap and prehensile rows can be trained as well.

To start, the higher anchor point offers overhead pull down options.

The mid anchor point creates the most work for core and legs to assist the back in rowing the resistance away from the anchor point. Working rows with the mid anchor point is generally better from versions of the staggered stance because this base of this orientation creates the ability to work with the greatest resistance.

All rows can be trained unilaterally and can include lower body moves like lunges or squats. When lunging, the resistance can be organized contra laterally and/or ipso laterally.



The lower anchor row offers resistance upwards and away and should be noted that the closer the work is done to the anchor the more upward resistance is available.

All these angles of resistance are very helpful for working different dimensions.

Anchoring one end high and the other low and working with resistance from the midpoint of the resistance band is very useful for creating resistance in all these different ranges of motion.

It is worth noting that this configuration of resistance bands will orient the hands in a vertical direction unless a handle is attached to the mid point.

Some handles can be adjusted to alter the angles of pull, some handles can also be used with the resistance on one end only, these options all create useful variety and ways to create specific work for specific needs.

The common connections to the resistance for rowing includes individual handles, bars, straps and fabric. Other than working with the midpoint of a high low anchor point configuration there is inherent versatility using individual handles in rowing with different hand and arm positions.

Using a bar for pulling doesn't have the versatility of individual handles but a bar offers useful capabilities. A bar resisted on both ends can be worked bilaterally in many dimensions that include working with the resistance on each end of the bar independently. A bar resisted on one end, asymmetrically, offers additional options for useful training



Changing the orientation to the anchor can be used to change the direction of the rowing action from front to back to cross body, all useful angles and variations.

Rows are simple to scale and progress, if the footing is good then more extreme angles can allow for significant resistance. If the footing is slippery then getting extreme with suspended rows is not going to be possible.

This is one move where a solid connection to the ground is going to really determine how much resistance can be worked with.

In the case of suspended rows, when facing the anchor, “distance is resistance” means when the feet are closer to the anchor the greater the amount of leveraged body weight and the resistance is.

Getting directly underneath the anchor is going to provide the most resistance for suspended rowing, the lower the handles the greater the resistance.

Suspended rows are particularly useful for supporting balance in a variety of squats and lunges. When doing this a good cue is keeping some resistance on the handles at all times. This helps beginners feel more confident as they shift weight from one side to the other and squat and lunge in new ways.

The progression from planked rows to pulling with squats and lunges can happen once the plank is solid and the various hand positions have been explored.

When incorporating squats and lunges have clients alternate concentrating on either using their legs more or pulling themselves up.



10/ Rotational Variations

One of the biggest advantages of APT is the ability to train in the transverse plane with resistance. Training the core for stability and rotation is simple with anchored resistance. The first exercise to master is the Palof Press, this exercise is designed to build core stability.

The user sets up side on at 90 degrees from the anchor.

Note user should not be in front of or behind the anchor point but beside it.

The anchor point can be high or low for the Palof press but waist height or a combined high/low anchor is going to work best for all the variations.

The further the feet are from the anchor the greater the resistance and the further out from the body the hands are pushed the greater the resistance. You can see how, in two distinct ways, distance is resistance with this exercise.



The basic stance is athletic, feet shoulder width or a bit wider apart, knees bent, shoulders down, spine neutral and gaze straight ahead.

The first variations of this exercise are easy to progress, they involve moving the handle around in different dimensions and directions of circles.

The next variation of this exercise involves a simple rotation. From the same stance as the Palof Press point the hands towards the anchor. Then while keeping

eyes on hands rotate the hands, arms and entire trunk so the hands go from facing the anchor to facing 90 degrees away and now point the same direction as the feet.

Notice how fully extending the hands away from the body increases the resistance, notice how changing hands from high to low when moving the hands across the body changes how the work is experienced.

The next variation of this idea is to open up the front foot so it is pointing away from the anchor, this opening up of the stance opens the hips up and provides a greater range of motion for the rotation movement.

Another simple variation of this exercise involves oscillation.



Using the FORCEband at full or 1/2 length set up in the Palof Press stance and then while the handles are pressed away from the body start to gently oscillate the hands up and down. The changes in resistance using this technique are a whole new challenge.

Variations to this approach involve more exaggerated movements up and down and shuffling further and closer to the anchor to change the resistance. A fun HIIT version of this involves doing alternating sets these oscillations adding a few more oscillations to each set. Cues are to keep the knees athletic, spine neutral and head tall.

The ability to create co-ordinated rotational movement is a major factor that determines athletic power, speed and strength.



The anchor height is again the first consideration that will dictate the nature of the work that can be done, the higher anchor point offering progressive resistance in a

downwards vector, low anchors offer progressive resistance in an upwards direction and mid anchors straight ahead.

Working with a resistance band connected to both high and low anchors will offer vectors of resistance in all directions.

Handles, depending on their design can be used to create different ranges of motion. The same types of hand orientations that can be created through pressing and rowing motions can be worked with, essentially a range of hand angles from overhand to underhand.

The asymmetric force applied to one end of the handle can be very well used in this orientation to the anchor point for sports specific ranges of motion.



Specific cross body rotational work is required for swinging things like baseball bats, tennis racquets and golf clubs.

Bars are useful for creating a variety of work. Working with a bar is introducing new elements of leverage into the equation.

The length of the bar itself, how far the connection point to the resistance is from the hands, how the hands are positioned along the length of the bar and their orientation are all factors that can be used to create different demands on the body while moving the resistance through similar ranges of motion.

Many of these two handed movements, like hockey and lacrosse can be trained with more resistance and longer bars, other two handed swinging and cross body ranges of motion like baseball and golf swings can be more specifically trained using shorter bars.



The position of the feet along the line of resistance are elements that can allow for different ranges of motion and different forces to be translated to the ground through the feet and lower body.

The front foot opening out on the follow through of some cross body movements provides for more range of motion.

The rotation of the back foot is part of a synchronized movement that brings the hips into the summation of forces and drives more force into a cross body movement.

Lungeing or side stepping away from the anchor point is another useful approach that can create additional cross body forces.

Working with suspended leveraged body weight when feet oriented are sideways to the anchor offers versions of side plank resistance.

An important aspect of the set up and one that folks can easily get mixed up in the beginning is the positioning of the feet.

The key is to set up with the foot closest to the anchor behind and the other foot forward thus keeping hips open to the anchor. The opposite split stance set up simply puts too much pressure on the lower back, the lumbar portion of the spine.

This type of side on work can be done from a single leg as well, either leg works fine and each offer distinct challenges.



When working split stance or single leg side plank the movement from this orientation can be a simple Palof press or versions of cross body row or fly can be used. When training suspension from this orientation the amount of resistance can be adjusted by either moving feet closer or further from the anchor and/or moving the resistance with hands closer or further from the body.

11/ Pulling and Pushing Variations

Pulling work is served by different types of belts and harnesses that connect the body directly to the resistance.

Using a belt attached to the body allows the work to be done with hands free of resistance, a particularly useful approach for high intensity sport specific work.

Working with a moveable connection point on the belt or having a belt that can rotate will allow for more versatile movements by allowing the force to swivel around the body to change the direction of the resistance.

When working legs pulling resistance it is possible to use a variety of footwork that will create useful demands to train stopping, starting and changing direction.

Working legs resisted this way always start with resistance on the band, so that first steps are resisted and so unresisted momentum does not help overcome the initial resistance.



When starting with resistance and returning to the anchor between reps the band should generally always be under some tension.

Train the first and last steps with both feet.

The higher connection point of a harness offers different characteristics including requiring more attention to the higher point of pulling force which can topple an unsuspecting client over.

When working with long bands, you can create lots of resistance with legs, keep people clear from anchor, ensure the connections to the user and the anchor are solid.

A high value approach to integrating legs and upper body in useful functional ranges of motion for many sports.

Like pulling always start with some resistance and then moving/pushing away from the anchor to train the appropriate resistance.

Incorporating athletic movements into this type of work can add to the work rate and have some sport specific benefits.

Football lineman have to fend with their hands and resist force while



staying on their feet moving in all directions.

Ball carriers need to train straight arming tacklers.

Basketball players in defense need to keep opponents in front of them and transition with strong first steps in many directions.

Wrestlers need to drive forward through defense for takedowns and resist opponents pushing and pulling in many directions.

All of these functional sports challenges can be trained with pushing.

Another approach, unilateral pushing creates useful cross body demands.

Pushing away with a bar has some great advantages, moving a bilaterally or asymmetrically resisted bar through many dimensions and side to side is useful.

Pushing drills with cones adds tremendous fun and challenge to a circuit workout. This is useful functional strength and conditioning.

Besides resisting the movements themselves in many useful ways the tempo and intensity can be designed as well to train different sports.



12/ Stretching Variations

There are many opinions on stretching, my own sense is like everything else a little bit goes a long way.

Dynamic stretches are a useful part of warmup before a workout.

I really enjoy some deeper static stretching after a workout.

Use the straps around wrists to take out the prehensile and this allows muscles to relax and for connective tissues and joints to feel the stretch more.

Simply pulling/leaning with body weight from different orientations provides a host of different useful angles.

This approach is particularly useful for stretching our core and upper body, lower body stretches are certainly possible.

Overhead anchoring offers an opportunity for back traction simply by hanging from the wrist straps, this is way more convenient than inversion tables and provides a good spine traction and immediate relief.



13/ Oscillation Variations

One of the unique aspects of long elastic resistance is the ability to oscillate the band to create a variable resistance.

In several orientations the movement patterns can be similar to battle ropes. The difference is this work is significantly less fatiguing for shoulders and offers more versatility for core training

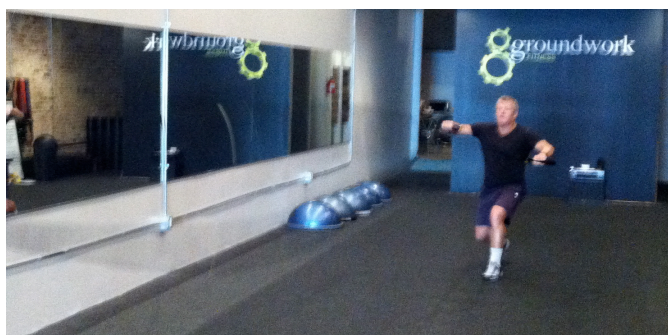
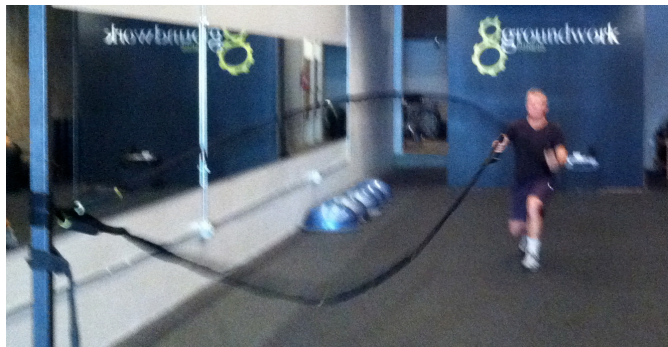
Getting the steady oscillation going and then moving in different ways is useful full body conditioning. This approach really fires up the core and forces the body to work fluidly through perturbation or “turbulence”.

Using different grips or connections to the bands will also change how the work is experienced.

The instability of the oscillation is useful for training balance and core with a variety of single leg moves.

Oscillation can add useful challenge to isometric hold moves like the Palof press. An isometric press or row can also be trained this way.

You will find this type of work, maintaining an isometric hold position and then adding oscillation to be remarkably taxing to the point where you can elevate your heart rate within a minute.



14/ Seniors Overview

The needs of seniors are well served by Anchor Point Training.

First seniors, as noted earlier, do not like getting down on the ground to exercise, furthermore seniors, more than most need to train on their feet.

Senior training is about often about restoring movement quality and mobility.

Seniors need accessible progressive balance and strength training.

Seniors need scalable resistance.

The simple suspended plank row and press are so scalable and can be progressed significantly.

The stability of using suspension with squats and lunges is very helpful to progressing resisted leg movements in many dimensions.

The variety made accessible by creating this suspension balance assist is significant.

Complexes and patterns can be developed that offer mind and body benefits. Progressing movement patterns is a way to add training that will help build cognitive reserve

Simple and specific work with elastic resistance can offer more of the type of thing that seniors need the most.



Bilateral pushing with the elastic resistance is a great full body exercise that is easily taught to start.

Scapular retractions are a little more difficult to teach but very effective for improving posture and shoulder mobility.



15/ About the Author

Chris Severs has been developing Anchor Point Training tools since 2008. He has worked with professional MMA fighters, martial artists and boxers, the National Ballet of Canada, hockey, football and rugby coaches, physiotherapists and doctors, gym and boot camp operators, young athletes and seniors in Canada and the United States.

During the years of training these different populations with diverse needs he had experiences and insights that lead to multiple generations of APT tool prototypes being developed.

His equipment designs and approach to Anchor Point Training are on the leading edge of this approach.

Several of his designs have been emulated in the industry and this APT over view and the term Anchor Point Training have become widely used.



Chris has presented his APT over view to fitness professionals at the NORCAL Fitness Summit in San Francisco, The Functional Aging Summit in Phoenix and the Fit Body Boot Camp World Congress in Irvine in 2015.

Before he became an industry leader in Anchor Point Training his claim to fitness fame was playing 40 seasons of competitive rugby. In 2011, at age 56, Chris played his last full season of competition.

