

Ep #158: Exploring Your Feet Part 5 – Your Feet: You Can Wear Sexy Boots and Have Happy Feet



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Susi Hatelty

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers, so you don't have to hear it scream. And now, here's your host, Susi Hately.

Welcome, and welcome back. With this episode, I continue the exploring your feet mini-series as a lead-up to my Power of Pure Movement course, Strong and Supple Feet, that I'm running on February 14th, 15th, and 16th. And this is the last episode of this mini-series on exploring the feet. And I want this to finish with a little bit of fun, a little bit of humor, a little bit of yes, I can do that.

And this is an episode catered to those of you who have sexy shoes and sexy boots. Because if you spend any length of time exploring the various trainings and the experts who are doing corrective exercises with feet, all of them pretty much, maybe that's a strong word, but a lot of them will tell you about footwear and how the footwear is really problematic to feet. And I don't disagree. Not at all. And there are times when sexy footwear is in order.

So then, how do you work with that? And I will tell you, I have had clients come to me for private sessions saying, Susi, I want to wear my sexy boots. I've got four weeks, let's go. And other clients who've been clients of mine for a while saying, okay, my back pain is gone, my shoulder pain is gone, my neck pain is gone. Susi, I really want to wear these boots for this event. And I'm like, all right, let's go. Let's go. And so we do, we go. And it's great, and it's fun.

Now, there'll be people out there saying, ugh, just don't have them wear the boots or the shoes. Who am I to say? Someone comes in, and they're like, yes, I really want to do these boots and shoes. And I'm like, sure. And the reason why I am entirely comfortable and I find it really fun is because, for me, the boot and shoe wearing in this context is more than wearing boots and shoes.

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It's a movement. Putting that foot into the shoe or the boot, it's a movement. And that shoe or boot will keep that foot in a position, and there will be a change of dynamic between the foot, the knee, and the hip compared to what the person normally wears, perhaps. And, to me, it's an event. It's not unlike going for a run or doing a running race, or a cycling race, or anything else where people are a bit concerned about how their body might fare.

So why not help improve the bandwidth for someone to be able to put their body in a different position? Because we all move in a variety of different positions. Our joints enable us to move in a variety of different positions, so why not allow for that varietal of movement, that variability of movement? Why not? Why not?

If anything, if we can improve one's structural integrity to be able to put their foot into different positions, and they've got the ability to absorb and dissipate that load, why not? Why not? So that's what this episode is about.; considerations that I utilize when I'm working with people, and it's typically a boot conversation. Typically the people who are coming in are saying, "I have got these awesome boots that I want to wear. Help me wear them."

And I've had people come in for a private series specifically for the boot. Now, they've got back pain and shoulder pain and other things. And so it's their carrot, it's their desire, and so we cater the whole process towards these boots. And in the process, they reduce their back pain, and their shoulder pain and all the things, and they're able to get into their boots and not suffer, and it be fun.

And then I'll have other clients who have been clients for a while or even my certification trainees who will say, "I really want to wear them, and I need some help to get there." Okay? So different stages of the healing trajectory is when this will come up.

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So this is what it's about. I know there'll be some people who will be rolling their eyes at me with this. But hey, roll your eyes away. Go for it. And for the others of you who want to keep on keeping on with me in this episode, let's dig in.

So there are five key things that I think about when I'm considering helping someone or when I'm working with someone who really wants to get into these sexy boots. And really, the sexy boots, that's their language of it, and that's why they want to wear them. And usually, they have a heel on them. The height of the heel, actually, I've never asked anybody what the height of the heel is because, all in all, the height of the heel to me doesn't matter.

To me, I'm looking at the overall dynamic of the foot and the ankle and the movement up through the chain. And so, for some people, it's a small heel. For other people, it's a big heel. It's a wobbly heel. And the key is, can I support them with the overall dynamic of what's going on through their body? So that's my aim with them.

So the first piece of this, the first bullet point, is the structural dynamics. And do they have structural integrity? And if they're asking me for help, the likely answer is no. So then, what I'm looking at is this relationship of their whole kinetic chain by initially starting between the hips, the knees, the ankles, and the feet. And looking at it not only ipsilaterally and on the same side as how that hip-to-foot works but also from the other side.

Because if you think about a gait pattern and a walking pattern when you're balancing on one leg to swing the other leg through. And so what's happening on one leg in order to swing the other leg through is really, really important. And then that foot on the other leg starts to land on the ground, and there's a dynamic between the outer hip on the opposite hip or the hip itself, the opposite hip and the opposite foot.

And so there's a lot of dynamic between, that's a cross pattern that requires a ton of stability and a lot of ability to adjust and be variable and be

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adaptable. And so when you've got that ability, then you can rock those boots in an awesome way.

So you're considering the ipsilateral, same side, contralateral, cross pattern, you're considering the whole kinetic chain. And really, the bottom line here is you're considering that movement is movement. Movement is movement. Do you have the bandwidth for this movement? Or do you not have the bandwidth for this movement?

And that really comes into my second point is bandwidth. And the key is, as you grow your structure, your structural integrity, as you grow your tissue's ability to be responsive to change, so whether you're standing, or sitting, or walking and how your tissue is adjusting to the position of your foot in the boot, and how you get about, like do you have the bandwidth for that? Do you have the ability to adapt to that? And how much?

So when I think about this in relation to running or to cycling, because the same thing, I'll have clients come in who want to run a 10k or a marathon, they'll want to ride a century, so either it's the metric century or the imperial century, whether it's 100 kilometers or 100 miles. Do they have the bandwidth for that? Do they have the capacity for that? Do they have the cardio for that? Do they have the ability to transfer and absorb and dissipate that load for that?

Like, how does their tissue respond? Because you can have the cardiovascular ability to do those activities but not the structural integrity, right? So it's the same thing in my mind with wearing the shoes. And it's more so a structural integrity versus cardio because they're not going for a 100-kilometer or a 100-mile walk, but the ability for their tissue to really be able to adapt. And do they have the bandwidth for that adaptability?

And that becomes really, really important. And to build that adaptability leads me to the third point, which is can you pay attention to your yellow lights? And the analogy or the relationship that I'll use for this is when I'm

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working with anybody, as they're getting better, often they'll say, well, when can I get back to the gym? And when can I get back to the fill-in-the-blank?

And I'll say, the more yellow lights that you're aware of, the greater your ability to do more stuff. So it's the same thing with wearing sexy shoes. The ability to have your foot in that position to have your heel in that elevated position, your ability to walk about with those boots on, you need to have the ability to tune into what your yellow lights are so that you can sense when it's too much. You can sense if it's going to be too much even, right?

So those are the whispers. And I've had other episodes about the yellow lights, so if you're new to listening to me, I recommend you go back to those episodes. And I'll have the actual episode numbers of the yellow lights in the show notes. So just click back to the episode website, and you can find that in the show notes if you want to dig deeper into that.

But I talk about the yellow lights a lot through these episodes because it's such a fundamental piece to the healing process. If you're not aware of what's contributing to the increase in symptoms, then it's going to be really difficult to have sustainable change. And those yellow lights really enable you to tune into is now the time to give it a go?

And then when you're out there in the shoes, in your boots, you can kind of get a sense, all right, maybe I should sit down right now. Or maybe I do need to lean up against this table. Or maybe you need to take the boots off. Sometimes, that does happen. But you just get a better feel of being able to listen to your body and tune into what those sensations and signals are to help guide you in making your decisions. And so if you don't have a lot of fluency around what those yellow lights are, it's going to be really difficult for you to be able to determine if this is a good choice to make.

Which then leads me to the next idea of what's your thinking about all of this, right? Because sometimes what can drive people into wearing boots that might be inappropriate for them, that they might not have the

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bandwidth for, they might just say, eff it, I'm going to do it anyway. And then off they go.

And what I want you to pay attention to is, if you're someone who typically says that, just as an experiment, say that to yourself right now. Kind of get yourself into the position. I know I'm kind of making this up right now, but just run with me for a minute. Just notice what it feels like when you say those things to yourself and what happens in your body.

And if you notice that you get tension in your body, then if you're putting on your boot and you've kind of got this eff it attitude, then what might happen, and I'm not saying it will, but what might happen, is you're heading out there with sort of tension already starting.

The same thing as if there's a lot of fear present. And if there's fear present, then notice what that fear feels like in your body. Because sometimes, if the fear is there, it's time to pause. It's time to really question, all right, is this really appropriate?

I'm not one to say change your thinking because, a lot of times thinking just doesn't change like that. And what I've seen with a lot of people in the attempt to change thinking they will superimpose a more positive thought, but they haven't changed the underlying thought that is leading to that tension feeling. But they kind of put this superimposed positive thought, thinking that that will be the thing, but still, the underlying mechanics are not changed.

So I'm not a huge fan of just changing thoughts. I am a huge fan of noticing what those thoughts feel like in one's body and then how that can then guide you to recognizing if what you're about to do is a good choice or not.

Now, there might be times when you have simply a concern. And you have a concern of, like, I wonder if I'm going to do okay with these boots. I wonder if this is the time, and there's a bit of sort of apprehension. But

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there's also this like, oh, but I so want to do this. These boots are so awesome.

And then you start to feel into, okay; what's the distinction there? And then you kind of play with the inner world that you have and notice what these feel like. Because sometimes there's that hope, and there's that excitement, kind of played off with some concern. Then you know how to go into the evening.

It doesn't need to cloud your evening. It doesn't need to be the lens through which you live your evening. No, and that's not my point. But rather, you're tuning into your own self and your own dynamic and bandwidth so that you can make really good decisions and take care of yourself.

That's how my clients do this. So they'll be super either, most of them are super excited. They might be a little bit apprehensive. But they also recognize, which is the next point that I want to make, that tissue can change, and your body can recuperate. So you go out and have a great, great time with your boots on, and you're having a grand old time. Maybe you feel some yellow lights. Maybe you feel some orange lights. Maybe you feel some red lights.

And you take care of yourself when you get back home. You give yourself a whole lot of love. A whole lot of love. And you kind of do a post-mortem of, like, what worked and what didn't work? Where did things work? Where could I improve?

And I am, no word of a lie, I will have clients come back to me after their great night out and say, all right, here is how long I lasted, and here is how much fun it was. And here is what I noticed in terms of the whispers. I noticed this within my feet. I noticed this in my back. And I noticed this in my shoulder. I noticed this in my gut. But what I also did is I found a great place to sit, and I found this.

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Like they come back with like a post-mortem on what the experience was like, which has them tune that much more into their body, honoring their body so much more. And sort of giving a like raise the roof, wasn't that great? And here's where I want to go next, right?

So we're continuing to refine how they are within their boot, their structural integrity, their ability to listen, recognizing their overall bandwidth, noticing their thought patterns related to it all. And then recognizing that they need to be able to recuperate, because just like running, and just like cycling and many other activities, you need to recuperate after putting your body through movement patterns that push through the bandwidth or maybe weren't entirely appropriate for you. And so then you take care of yourself.

It's really as simple as that. Another way of thinking about it, too, is I've got many clients who are hikers, given where I live and the kind of people who are attracted to what it is that I do. And they will wonder, all right, should I summit? Can my knee do it? And they kind of settle into their body, and they feel for their knee and say, all right, can I? Can I not? And then sometimes they're like, I don't know, but I'm going to do it anyway.

But by going into it consciously, oftentimes, the result is way less dramatic, way easier. And when I say dramatic, I mean kind of like it's a negative result. The tissue responds more effectively. And even if there are whispers of yellow or orange, maybe if there is strain, it's not nearly as bad as they were concerned about.

To me, wearing awesome shoes for a night out, same thing. Same thing. You get to tune in, you get to play in with your body, and you get to be an advocate with your body and really support your body for doing this. It's you with your body, sexy shoes, having a great, great time.

All right, so I hope that provided some fun, and some ideas, things that you could do for your own self and know that you do not have to put those boots away. Those boots were made for walking.

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All right, so if you need more help with this, if you've resonated with this, if you want to dig in with me with this and really get into your feet and recognize the structural integrity and the whole kinetic chain, I would love for you to join me for Power of Pure Movement: Strong and Supple Feet, happening on February 14th, 15th, and the 21st.

For more details, have a read at learn.functionalsynergy.com/feet. I would love to see you there. See you next time.

If this episode has resonated and you're looking to deepen this idea of getting your body back on board, of listening deeply to your symptoms, of listening to the whispers, so you don't have to hear the screams, and you're looking for one to one support or professional training, then reach out to us at health@functionalsynergy.com where we can customize your learning path. That's health@functionalsynergy.com. Looking forward to hearing from you.