



### Mr. Fix It

November 3, 2008

By: Caitlin Connors

[caitlinc@aycmedia.com](mailto:caitlinc@aycmedia.com)

My foot couldn't touch the floor.

I was lying on my side on one of the massage tables and Joseph Zarett was pushing my top leg down past my hip to the ground; it didn't move much. All the doctors said I had tendonitis, but in five minutes with me, Zarett had properly diagnosed that it wasn't just my hamstrings causing me pain, but my iliotibial band. "You have the leg of an 80-year-old woman; when we're done today you'll be back to 25," joked Zarett in his usually dry tone. Zarett loves to joke, but is a intimidating-looking man with Ukrainian inflections who seems scarily serious (although you can get a smile out of him; just tell him he's too serious).

He leaves me for a moment to check on another patient one curtain over on another massage table. The man is trying, incessantly, to tell Zarett about some new oscillating machine that burns fat; Zarett is having none of it. After a painful effort on the clients part to telemarket this machine, Zarett folds. "Fine. I'll get your oscillating machine. I'll put it near the fish tank and you can oscillate and watch the fishes. Would you like to watch the fishes?" Zarett says calmly, tactfully leaving the debate unscathed and in charge. The whole staff is smiling.

Zarett returns to me and immediately resumes stretching and pulling me in positions that would make the Karma Sutra editors blush. This is when we notice I have the left leg flexibility of Bea Arthur. And simultaneously the moment when I learn about a medieval-like torture called scraping. Scraping is actually an East Asian technique that involves scraping the skin with a smooth-edged flat tool i pressured strokes. Doesn't sound bad, right? Now imagine a large plastic ice scraper literally filing your sore tendon or muscle. Over and over. Until it's black and blue. And there are broken blood vessels. More scrapping over your screaming bruises. Zarett is impressed with my pain-threshold but doesn't realized I blacked out for a good 4 - 5 seconds.

Although this sounds *Inferno*-ish, I must add I am quite elated about the whole Zarett experience and now going to see him three times a week at 6:30am (and looking forward to it.

Let me explain.



Zarett is incredibly likeable, but also very serious about each body that walks through his door: with each client that enters there are shoulder rubs, friendly cheek kisses and other sweet welcomes.

The three-floor rehabilitation and fitness center is bustling with highfalutin Main Line clients, lawyers, athletes, injured locales who are privy to Zarett and contractors working on the space--Zarett is redoing the whole place; massive artwork, white modern massage tables, room-dividing fish tanks, sleek VIP showers and locker rooms, new equipment and stylish blonde-wood table and chairs are all part of the reopening.



Zarett's whole theory is built around the idea that to heal the injury, you must strengthen the weakened areas, increase flexibility and balance the body. From fitness (Zarett's personal trainers and top-notch equipment is there for use even after you are pain-free), to

muscle work to massage, Zarett makes sure every aspect of the body is cared for. With one workout session, the personal trainers and personal trainer assistants can tell you more about your body and weak areas than any of your past coach or gym trainers. Every person here gets special attention; Zarett and the personal trainers treat each body like a precise instrument that needs carefully calculated workouts and programs.



It's moments like this that define the whole Zarett experience better than any list of awards, accolades and socialite and celebrity clients (although I do have to mention that walls lined with celebrity photos are reminiscent of Old Original Bookbinders; although instead of Frank Sinatra, Zarett is standing with Pete Sampras). There's a feeling here that no matter who you are, what sports you do (if any) or how well-known you are, you get treated like the MVP of team about to head to nationals, like Lance Armstrong before the Tour De France, like a body that needs the most exact attention and workout programs. It makes me feel like I should request only red M&Ms and Evian water at my next intramural volleyball match at the local high school gym.

Zarett repeats the initial stretch we did; my left leg can now touch the floor. He's increased the flexibility in my leg at least 85% in less than 30 minutes.

This is why Zarett Rehab & Fitness is so popular.

**Watch the video below to see the writer working out with Zarett on NBC's live morning show. Zarett Rehab & Fitness, 520 S. 19th St., 215.731.1449, [www.zarettrehab.com](http://www.zarettrehab.com)**