

How to Get the Most Out of Your Pilates (reprinted courtesy of Lesly Levy of Mindful Moves Studio)

Pilates, or rather, "contrology" is the coordination of mind, body, and spirit" (Joseph Pilates, Return to Life, 1945).

What did Joe really mean by this? Anyone who has ever experienced his method knows how demanding it really is. It takes the utmost concentration, attention to detail and intention as well as muscular control, strength, stamina, stability, and stretch in order to move in a certain way. This is truly a demand on the unity of mind, body & spirit. If one is missing, the method will only take you so far. The exercise given will merely be perceived as one, and then maybe another, each used to strengthen or stretch the body (much like weight training). The method is so much more than that. Pilates is a journey toward self-discovery, toward proper movement. Through the method, we begin to move more easily, more as a connected set of parts, more united and centered. So what does it take to really experience this journey? Assuming that you have already found a qualified instructor* who is inspiring and clear with direction and guidance, honoring the following five basic ingredients will help you unveil your true potential.

1. Listen—Good Listening skills come first and foremost. Listen to the instructions offered to you by your teacher. Your instructor will give you simple instructions on how to move your body. As your ability increases, the instructions will change from simple set-up and movement directions to those with more intricate details giving way to a deeper connection to your core as well as more united, whole body movement. Your entire participation is required, your willingness to surrender to cues. Remember that Pilates is precision based, requiring great attention to detail.
2. Intention—Without your complete intention on doing your best during your workout

*If you're reading this article in 'the Scoop', you already have

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You will only be cheating yourself. We all have days when we are a bit sluggish, when trying our hardest is just not in the cards, but if this is an every session occurrence, then you will never get very far into the Pilates system. This can become very frustrating for both the student as well as the teacher.

3. Focus— Please make no mistake, focus does not mean that you have to think hard, but you should, however, attempt to remember what comes next in your reformer or mat series, Sometimes the instructor will add a variation or insert another exercise, but the basic order of the workout will not change much, Once a new exercise is introduced, it will remain in the student's repertoire. The more you remember, the more you will flow. If you succeed, you will move with control from one exercise to the next like "poetry in motion" (Romana Kryzanowska).

4. Patience—Do not rush! The point of Pilates is not just to get there and back. There is none of that. We live in such a fast paced world that often we do not know how to slow down, we are big multi-taskers, often working while raising children, careers, driving carpools, doing errands, cooking, etc. Many of us have already experienced other fitness modalities such as jogging, spinning, boxing, stepping and weight training and associate the Pilates method as just one more. Not true in the least! The difference is that you are creating long lasting building blocks of muscle memory. Take the time to really develop the best skills in the beginner system. When you add more flow, which does not mean speed but rather to link all of the movements, you will be graceful, balanced and stable in your work. This is what makes the difference. The key is what happens during the movements not at the end. (remember if you are really focused and flowing with your movements, the end doesn't come for 55 minutes). You will have no chance of building muscle memory when rushing through the instructor's corrections. The idea is to continue to move thru the work, while taking the time to hear and then internalize the cues.

5. Regular Attendance— Students will inevitably always ask the same question, "I have heard the phrase '10 sessions and you will feel different, 20 and you will look different and 30 you will have a whole new body', How true is that?" Joseph Pilates made this claim when his students were coming to him 3-4 times per week and perhaps daily. Once again, this brings us back to our busy lives, yet if you are really serious, and are trying to build good muscle memory, practicing regularly in and out of the studio makes a big difference. If you tend to cancel a lot, not show up or frequently come in late for the appointment you've made for yourself, or you only practice once a week, you can expect to have a longer and sometimes frustrating journey toward building new muscle memory with the aforementioned claim.

In short, an often touted phrase used in Power Pilates "consistency is the key to change" makes the point well. Bob Leikens of Power Pilates also often says "you will get out of Pilates what you put into it". Staying true to these 5 ingredients each time you begin your Pilates practice will enable you to truly experience Pilates in the way it was intended. An entire new world of flowing, balanced,

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Graceful movements will open up to you as will the new limber and toned body you are looking for. So hang on, and enjoy the ride!!



Colleen's Corner

Well, much has happened since last newsletter, as well can be expected after such a long hiatus.

One of the nicest things is that we're now accepting new clients here at Whole Pilates. Tiffany McLeod is now teaching private lessons as well as duets and trios here

in the studio. Her enthusiasm for the work is infectious and her students appreciate that. Appointments can be booked with Tiffany or Colleen in the usual manner, and are held here at the studio.

We have new, permanent digs for our Pilates mat classes. The Great Halls Health and Wellness Center just opened in Ringwood by Dona Garofano of Food For Thought Health Foods. The space is just what we needed and everyone is enjoying it very much. The center also offers a wide array of excellent health and healing modalities, such as acupuncture, cranio-sacral therapy, and massage, to name just a few. Check out the website (www.Greathallsofhealing.com)

The last bit is rather exciting. For a limited time Whole Pilates will be offering a special summer package for private one-on-one lessons in the studio.

The Summer 10-Pack can be used from June 22nd and expires September 1st and is only \$550. (saving you \$14 off each lesson, this is an excellent value!) This special promotion is to help new clients get on track, but even veteran students can buy one. (sorry—just one)

We're launching this just this once, and depending on how it's received it may become an annual event. Call for more details.

New Classes offered in April/May:
Monday Mornings, 10am, Beginner Mat
Tuesday 8pm Beginner Mat, 7pm Advanced
Wed Evenings 7pm, Beginner/Intermediate
Saturday Mornings, 8:30am, Intermediate

10 Class Pilates Mat Series: \$150
held @ Health and Wellness Center
127 Skyline Drive (near CVS)
SPACE IS LIMITED
RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

Contacts and Credits:

To include yourself on our email list, or if you have questions or comments, write us at : colleen@wholepilates.com

Please go to our website, <http://www.WholePilates.com> to see what we've been working on, view archived newsletters, and streaming videos of the exercises, photo gallery, or to get the link for the Biofeedback game.

To install Adobe Acrobat, go to: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Colleen Wenrich, RN, has been teaching wellness & fitness for over 20 years and is Certified Authentic Pilates, ACSM, AFAA, ACE and BCIA.