

THE PILATES JOURNAL

INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR. INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR.
2023
THE PILATES
JOURNAL
AWARDS



RESONATE WITH YOUR CLIENTS

Your clients need more than perfect cueing, they need resonance.

THE POWER OF PROGRESSIONS

Understand the skills required to layer a meaningful reformer program.

SO YOU WANT TO BE AN INSTRUCTOR

We uncover what they don't tell you when you become an instructor.



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The Pilates Journal would like to acknowledge and pay respects to the Gadigal people of the EORA nation as the traditional custodians of the place we call home - Sydney - where this journal is produced.

The Pilates Journal pays respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Note from the Editor



Welcome to the latest issue of The Pilates Journal.

A new year brings so many things into perspective. You might be considering where you want to take your Pilates training next, looking for ways to create more work-life balance or dreaming up new approaches to help your clients differently this year.

This month we speak with US Pilates professional Misty Lynne Cauthen about elevating your teaching to become more intuitive with your clients plus we delve deep into the benefits of progressions for reformer instructors.

For those new to the industry or considering being a Pilates teacher, we talk about the things they didn't tell you when you become an instructor. For Studio owners, learn what to consider when hiring new instructors.

And finally, we get to share the winners of The Pilates Journal Awards. With over 300 nominations there were many outstanding candidates doing so much good for Pilates communities worldwide.

Let's kick off the year with strength and purpose!

CJZarb

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On the Cover

Helen Fletcher - Equipoise Pilates and Movement Education

2023
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Winners Revealed



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2023
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Meet our winners

INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR



Helen Fletcher

EQUIPOISE PILATES AND MOVEMENT EDUCATION

Helen emerges as the deserving winner of Pilates Instructor of the Year due to her remarkable impact on the wellbeing of a 56-year-old client over 15 years. She skilfully guided her novice client to enhanced flexibility, mobility and core strength, addressing specific hip and shoulder issues with customised exercise prescription. With 20 years of teaching experience, Helen excels in her ability to explain complex biomechanics simply and succinctly, whilst demonstrating a continued commitment to ongoing learning. Her work with equestrians is highly regarded locally and internationally, offering Zoom classes and flexible schedules. Her clients appreciate her individualised approach, kindness, generosity, and ability to instill confidence. Helen's empathetic, studious, and dedicated nature, her expertise and certifications, combined with her ability to foster a safe and joyful atmosphere make her a well-deserved recipient of the Pilates Instructor of the year award.

Runner Up

Kimi Broadbent
 The Pilates Vibe

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2023 THE PILATES JOURNAL AWARDS

NEW INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR



Lisa Zaiko

NORTHERN RIVERS PILATES

Lisa secures the title of New Instructor of the Year, a testament to her exceptional contributions to the studio and the Pilates community. As a certified Polestar Mat and Studio practitioner, Lisa's compassion, dedication, and loyalty shine through in her popular classes, distinguished by a kind and creative approach. From NDIS participants to dancers and athletes, she adeptly caters to a diverse clientele, earning acclaim for her work in injury prevention and body improvement. Lisa's commitment to continuous personal and professional growth sets her apart as an outstanding Pilates professional. This award not only acknowledges her impactful role but also celebrates her as a worthy winner, validating her purpose and recognising her excellence in the field.

Runner Up

Jorja Purdie
Aligned for Life Pilates



MENTOR OF THE YEAR



Troy McCarty

WHITE CLOUD STUDIOS

Troy rightfully claims the title of Mentor of the Year, leveraging decades of experience from Pilates masters and meticulous attention to detail to shape the precision, form, and alignment skills of his mentees. With over 40 years of practice, Troy not only imparts technical expertise but also emphasizes the importance of building a strong community. His support extends beyond the studio, as he actively engages in social and charitable events to benefit the community. Troy's commitment to mentorship is further evident in his open-door policy, allowing unlimited access to his studios for trainees, staff, and mentees, creating an environment that fosters learning, collaboration, and professional growth.

Runner Up

Carla Mullins
Body Organics



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BOUTIQUE STUDIO OF THE YEAR



Runner Up

Jill Harris
Jill Harris Pilates

Emerald Pilates Studio

DI DALLOGGIO

Emerald Pilates Studio, owned by Di Dalloggio, rightfully claims the title of Boutique Studio of the Year with its unparalleled dedication and unique approach. With a passion for Pilates since 2003, Di's extraordinary work ethic shines through. With a Diploma Qualification and a commitment to continuous learning, Di has cultivated a community of dedicated clients who share her disciplined pursuit of a pain-free and energetic lifestyle. Established in 2016 and expanded into two premises, Emerald Pilates caters to a diverse clientele with group Reformer, Barre, Mat Pilates in one studio, and a Clinical Studio for clients with injuries, conditions, or professional athletes. Di's motto, "everyone is a VIP," resonates through the studio, fostering a sense of community and success stories, including an 85-year-old client improving his golf game. Despite the challenge of booking classes, Di's innovative solution of personally managing bookings has not only ensured consistency but also contributed to the studio's financial success. Emerald Pilates stands out as a bustling, educational, and fun studio, embodying the essence of a Boutique Studio of the Year.



PILATES INFLUENCER OF THE YEAR



Runner Up

Tash Barnard
TashB Pilates

Lisa Kaye

PILATES ONE2ONE

Lisa secures the title of Pilates Influencer of the Year with an impressive and impactful presence in the Pilates community. As a STOTT PILATES Instructor, Instructor Trainer, and Presenter since 1996, specialising in Pilates since 2002, Lisa has emerged as a top-performing Pilates account on Instagram with 300k followers. Her commitment to safe and effective Pilates workouts is evident through her popular online themes, including the annual #passthepilatesball challenge (in its 7th year), as well as the weekly #FitballFriday and #ToningTuesday hashtags, where she collaborates with instructors worldwide. Lisa's shift to posting accessible home-based workouts during the COVID-19 pandemic also propelled her account's growth. Emphasising the distinction between Pilates and fitness Pilates, she prioritises creating safe and effective workouts in her online courses for various skill levels. Lisa's motivational challenges and mindful approach to posting inclusive workouts for Pilates enthusiasts make her a standout Pilates influencer, deserving of the Influencer of the Year recognition.



2023 THE PILATES JOURNAL AWARDS

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



Olga Tamara

AUTHENTIC PILATES

Olga stands as the deserving winner of Educator of the Year, embodying a second-generation teacher with certifications in 'Romana's Pilates' and the New York Method since 2003 under the guidance of Cynthia Lochard. She remains a stalwart advocate for the fundamental principles of Classical Pilates, passionately mentoring clients, students, and teacher trainers alike. Olga's unwavering belief in the integrity of the work and its transformative power positions her as an exemplary educator. Olga is the Principal Instructor and Owner of Authentic Pilates Studio in Lilyfield, Australia where she demonstrates her passion daily. Olga's commitment to expanding opportunities through her certification program, 'Authentic Pilates Education International,' reaching Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (2017-2020) and Korea, is truly inspiring. By arranging international conferences and hosting esteemed guests, Olga not only strengthens the Pilates community but also preserves Joseph Pilates' enduring legacy. Olga's ability to read and guide bodies, coupled with her emphasis on flow and connection, sets her apart. Her hands-on approach is considered heaven for the body, and her empowerment of teachers to understand the dynamics of exercises with flow and connection solidifies her status as an outstanding educator in both Contemporary and Classical Pilates. Olga's continuous quest for learning, open-mindedness, and dedication to educating teachers from all schools makes her an invaluable force in the Pilates community.



Runners Up

Blossom Leilani Crawford
Bridge Pilates
&
Tracey Nicholson, Tensegrity Training.

Congratulations to all our winners

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Charting a new way to resonate with your clients

THE CLIENTS WHO WILL FOLLOW YOU TO THE MOON AND BACK NEED SOMETHING MORE FROM YOU THAN PERFECT CUEING -THEY NEED RESONANCE

by Misty Lynne Cauthen



Think back to a time when you were at your freest: when your life felt effortless, when your joy was almost palpable. Imagine the smells, the sounds... imagine how the air felt as it blew across your skin.

Now imagine someone telling you that experience was wrong. It didn't happen that way. Your recollections are not quite right. Your sensations are not appropriate. Imagine being told to instead focus on a tiny fragment of your experience - isolating that fragment from all other feelings that previously accompanied the memory.

The jarring transition from blissful recollection to micromanaged analysis can feel like a whiplash to some, yet it's exactly what we ask of our clients when we teach them to move by dictating to them how it should feel, why it needs to be a certain way, and peppering them with fear-centered cueing.

Pilates is notorious for being an exclusionary, elitist "hobby" that caters a certain type of person; while the overall demographics of the trade are changing, many of the old ways of communicating with our clients are not. I believe it's our job, as the next generation of teachers who believe in the power and potential of this work, to chart a new path.

There is an adage that tells us it is better to give than to receive, in many circumstances, the adage stands: what teacher doesn't bask in the dopamine explosion that overcomes us when we see the magic unfold before our very eyes? I think many of us continue teaching because we witness the fruits of our labour every day - personally, there is no better confirmation that I'm in the right profession than when the last client on a long day stops to say they feel better than they did when they started the lesson. Their joy is my joy, and I would not change a thing.

It can be easy to turn the appreciation of being appreciated into a litmus test of a false truth - a test we judge ourselves harshly for failing - that may lead to impostor syndrome and a myriad of other impediments to our growth as teachers.

I dare say it is self-judgment as teachers that saps our humanity and we must not allow it to be our sole measure of success. The pressure to achieve at all costs can be powerful: it has the potential to take the joy from our teaching and replace it with cynicism and CECs for specialties that do not affect our ability to raise rates (in the eyes of the public). It motivates us to purchase "the next big thing" or pursue the latest and most authentic/contemporary/arbitrarily agnostic training program or workshop because hey! The shiny new thing may make us this

much better so we can pass go, collect \$200 (we hope), and ascend to the next level.

We must remember that teaching is multidimensional. Many facets are involved in the act of showing up and providing information and knowledge that stretch beyond the order and structure of the session; to judge ourselves harshly for not getting it right immediately without considering all of the nuance and texture that exists within the teacher and client experience is shortsighted at best. We have a tendency, as architects of movement experiences, to base our successes or failures on the physical achievements of our clientele, but I think that can be the easiest part of what we do. Cueing someone or a group of someones to find a shape in their bodies, while sprinkling in the proper anatomical terms, and ending class on time is what teacher training prepares us to do - it does not prepare us for navigating the storm that is a room of one or several humans and their individual hearts and heads and mindsets. We learn to manage the humanity of our clients in real-time. Imagine being trusted to care for a falcon but only being given the part of the book that talks about safety. Is it fair that we base our (or theirs) success on incomplete information?

What if we change the metrics we use to define success? Can we change the client experience in a way that uplifts the educator, so that we may improve the shared experience that is a Pilates lesson?

Far too often, in our haste to be the smartest/brightest/most fantastic-est, we disregard a need that is hardwired into our disposition, and that is to resonate with each other to find ease. It's not merely a top, down affair; it's the limbic resonance between us as communal beings that allows us to wordlessly share our hearts and minds and grow together harmoniously.

Limbic resonance can be simply defined as a state of deep emotional and psychological connection between two people. It's

***“We must remember
that teaching is
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it’s our role to encourage
our clients to arrive
authentically, speak freely,
and learn to understand who
they are as movers”***



also referred to as emotional contagion or mood contagion. Think about the last time you were with someone who caught a case of the giggles and you couldn't stop yourself from doing the same - this is limbic resonance.

As another example, consider the feelings that wash over us when subbing a class for a well-known and adored teacher: when we enter the class demonstrating positivity and confidence, we're much more likely to set a tone that encourages reciprocation of that mood (or at least tacit neutrality). Conversely, if we enter with nervousness and trepidation, the class absorbs and mirrors it back to us.

In asking our public to be vulnerable, and let's be honest - the mere act of showing up in a Pilates studio can be a test of fortitude - we also ask them to be present. If we order them to dissociate from what they feel and think by leaving their feelings at the door, we may see a detachment from the present, as well as; loss of flow, restricted movement, and the inability to follow instructions, which are all symptoms of detachment in the movement space. This is where the real problem occurs, because in creating a "safe space," we've diminished the safety of our clients, and that is where the trust breaks down.

Rather than demanding the clients to wall off part of their psyches to not upset others, we as teachers can invite our clients to lean in. Our clients deserve the right to show up as they are and be treated with kindness and respect.

But do clients care about any of this? In all of my years of teaching, I've only had a single client ask for my credentials... but I've had countless clients tell me they feel seen, heard, and respected. My teacher training didn't teach me how to do that - my parents did.

Clients don't care about where you come from. The clients who stay - the ones who would follow you to the event horizon and back - need something more from you than a perfect Snake and Twist. They need resonance.

Remember, clients are humans, too and need that connection. Our clients, like ourselves, are still recovering from shrapnel wounds of the past and they bring every wound into the studio along with them.

In my opinion it's our role to encourage our clients to arrive authentically, speak freely, and learn to understand who they are as movers. Give them the space for self-discovery and give them the right to participate as they are in their session. People grow not only because of the repetition of skills and sound pedagogy but also because of a mutual belief in one another. That support is mutually beneficial - when our clients grow, we grow. We are active participants in our clients' evolution, and that motivates us to keep going!

For the most part, clients STAY with us because of our ability to relate to them - to meet them where they are and walk beside them.

Recognizing our need to be seen for our talent is a human condition that makes us real. It's the authenticity that makes us relatable and provides dimension to our teaching. It keeps us going, even when things get monotonous (owning the potential for monotony in the trade is another important part of owning our humanity, FWIW).



Yes, we can evolve our connections, avoid burnout, and share in felt experiences. To do so we have to create an energetic flow that serves all parties involved. And yes, that means us as well.

As a teacher of Pilates for more than 20 years, Misty Lynne uses her brand, Dragonfly Pilates, as a platform to enhance the lives of her students inside and outside of the studio. She strives to bring equity and humanity to Pilates by creating spaces in which people can show up as their true selves and deepen their resonance with themselves and movement.

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Purposeful Pilates includes Progression

HOW OFTEN DO YOU FOCUS ON PROGRESSION AS PART OF YOUR CLASS GOALS? IF IT'S NOT AT THE TOP OF THE LIST - READ ON

by **Carla Mullins**

There is an old proverb...

“You can give a man a fish and feed him that day.

Teach a man to fish and he can feed him for a lifetime”

The pilates teacher training and programming equivalent is:

“You can teach a person some repertoire and they can instruct a generic class during a fad; and be easily replaced by Artificial Intelligence.

Teach someone to program and modify and they can maintain the interests and health of a client base for years”

In recent times we've seen a focus on repertoire-based teaching and training that has sadly left many an instructor without the skills to layer a program to create meaningful progression of a program.

The reason I know this is because I see comments on social media about instructors needing help with progressions and the rise of all sorts of services that provide choreography that can be plugged straight into classes. I see it when I have students in my continuing education courses who are genuinely bemused by progression and programming and how the elements of movements and goal progressions relate to each other.

What is more concerning is that there has become a disconnect between purposeful focused pilates with a client-centered practice and the generic pilates experienced by a wide group of the population. It is this disconnect which highlights to me what is and what is not pilates because mindful connection (also known as concentration) is an essential principal of pilates.

In order to progress our clients effectively, we need to consider the following connections when it comes to progression:

— Goal setting, identifying your client's motivation for coming to pilates; their strengths and barriers. In the case of a group setting, you can set goals for the group and as a teacher it helps you formulate your plan.

— How to transfer goals into a meaningful program? For example is to improve balance or spinal mobility and what does that look like in a pilates setting.

— What are the elements of the goal, that is each component or concept that needs to be achieved in order to address the needs. For example, in Balance work, there are many systems involved -

e.g. visual, vestibular and proprioceptive systems. If the goal is to intelligently improve balance, then you need to understand these elements in order to modify and tailor the program accordingly.

— Working with the systems of the body (not just muscular/skeletal) and a little bit of physics (load, levers, gravity and congruency).

— Well-structured programming is part of good cueing. When a program is appropriately layered you give clients the opportunity to build their understanding and relationship with the body. It means that you are not needing to give as many cues to the class in general. It means that as a teacher you can focus on identifying those clients who need more modifications or adaptations.

This sort of purposeful programming and progression is relevant to both individualised and group class settings. The safest way for a group instructor to create a consistent client group who build strength not injuries is to create term-based programs with an articulated goal and progression. In itself, it is not a solution to huge class sizes where there are too many people for the teacher to safely supervise. My philosophy is simple - it focuses on class planning not class cramming.

How do we build a program in a group setting?

Below is a list of points that I use when developing a program. The examples used are only examples to guide your thinking. There are many more permutations that you can play with when you understand the basic considerations.

1. Purpose/ Goal

Identify the purpose of the program and the important elements. For instance, knowing which joints, range of motions and myofascial systems are essential for that goal. It could be a combination of the below elements.

- a. What muscular/ skeletal goal
 - i. Upper Body strength
 - ii. Lower limb strength
 - iii. Torso
- b. Systemic goal
 - i. Balance
 - ii. Cognitive
 - iii. Cardiovascular
 - iv. Lymphatic
 - v. Neurological
 - vi. Skeletal
- c. Specific population group
 - i. Athletes
 - ii. Post-menopausal women
 - iii. Teenager girls

Remember when you are looking at a muscular skeletal goal, a class needs to be balanced, which I will come back to later in the article.

2. Flow and layer

- a. Get organised with one set up for at least 20 minutes
 - i. If working on equipment I try to find a spring set up that works for at least 10 exercises in a row. It means that your clients can flow but you as a teacher are not spending half the class making sure the clients are on the appropriate spring for them. Instead, you can



ii. be spending more time teaching and adjusting for clients.

iii. Identify stations on your apparatus so that you can consider that the person is working consistently at that station. For example, on the tower ensure you work with the Push Through Bar for at least 20 minutes of the program. The exercises change but the organisation around the equipment does not.

— No more than three set up /changes in a class.

— Ordering and pacing your program

- Ensure that the organisation layers the muscle groups so that there is balance around the joint. Form is lost and injuries occur when you do 40 minutes on the glutes only.
- Remember that a philosophy of pilates is to balance the muscular around the body to create a total body workout.

3. Exercise choice

There are a number of different ways Pilates Instructors and Teachers are trained to understand exercise groupings and choices. The risk is the students can be taught a recipe where you take from an item on a list, but in itself does not help with developing nuanced programming.

- a. Exercise family - Some courses categorise repertoire into families, for example, abs, hip disassociation, arms so that there is an idea that you choose a little bit from each of the



list to give a full body workout. In this case I am thinking of the block systems used by PITS, NPTC and BASI that help to facilitate the learning.

- Area categories - Lower limb, Upper limb, Torso. This sort of organisation of exercises I have seen in courses developed by Allied Health practitioners, notably many of the short repertoire courses I am seeing these days are “developed” by this group of practitioners. This style of short courses does not help students to appreciate the complexity and interrelationship of movement patterns. The result being that we see programs based solely around one musculoskeletal grouping, and not the body as a whole.
- Stability - supported by limb alignment.
 - Mobility of the joints - safe ranges built and supported before going to the end of range of motion. These programs ensure that there is balance in the muscles so that you have an equal and balanced pull on the joints.
 - Flexibility is about muscles and the use of active stretching eccentric work as part of your pacing strategies.
 - When programming I like to consider the following principles for exercise groupings and choices that I progress over a number of weeks and months.

1. First, I'll focus on the use of a muscular sling (Deep Longitudinal, Lateral or Oblique) and work the muscles in that sling to create dynamic stability in the torso. This focus would then be maintained for a term if in a group class setting.
2. I also ensure that when I'm programming that I chunk the exercise choices so I start with exercises and cues that will create proximal stability, for example organising the stabilising muscles of the pelvis, shoulder girdle and neck.
3. Once I can see that the proximal alignment and stability is achieved, I then cue bilateral strengthening exercises for the limbs focusing in the order isometric first, then eccentric and concentric resistance and load.

4. Initially, I program and cue homologous that is the lower limb or upper limb. This strategy allows clients to layer coordination and control strategies (for e.g. leg floats or leg circles building to levers such as double leg stretch)
5. I then layer in the program (generally after a few weeks) to incorporate homolateral movement that is the arm and leg on one side (e.g. single leg stretch)
6. I then program later in the progressions to add in contralateral movement which challenges coordination as it involves crossing the midline (for e.g. criss cross or swimming). Foundations of stability and control and certain movement patterns need to have been laid down for clients before they can master these more complex movement patterns.
7. Endurance exercises or flows are progressively laid into the program but at all times clients are cued and supported to build towards endurance exercises such as the series of five, or swimming. If a client does not have the capacity to maintain form in the endurance sequence, then inappropriate strain occurs which can eventually lead to long term injuries. I think of shoulder injuries and hip injuries that occur from poor form or teachers giving clients weights to hold through a whole class to build strength at any cost.

In thinking about programming in this way we are thoughtfully progressing our clients, keeping them engaged and ensuring we have a robust long-term retention plan. As a result, we end up practising the true essence of Pilates practice.

Body Organics Education teaches programming and goals as part of their certification courses. They have teacher trainers in Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Melbourne, Miami (Florida USA) . Norfolk (Virginia USA) Noosa, Sydney. To discover more info@bodyorganicseducation.com

Students from other schools of training can also attend the course. Book before 31 March 2024 and get \$150 off the training using the promo code - ThePilatesJournal. Book [here](#).

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So you want to become a Pilates Instructor?

WE UNCOVER WHAT THEY DON'T TELL YOU WHEN YOU BECOME A PILATES INSTRUCTOR

by Jaime Lake O'Dea and CJZarb



With over 12 years of experience as a Pilates teacher and a background as a personal trainer and group fitness instructor, I understand what it takes to be in the fitness industry for a long time. I've also completed Pilates courses with some of the biggest education providers to grow my knowledge and skill set which makes me perfectly equipped to share my advice with Pilates lovers out there who might be thinking of making a career change/switch and need to understand what the life of a Pilates teacher is really all about.

Here are the top 10 things to consider when thinking about becoming a Pilates instructor.

1. Research the different Training Providers

When considering where you might study to become a Pilates instructor take the time to think about what you want to teach and why. There are so many types of Pilates out there that you need to be clear and what feels right for you.

Having a Certificate 3 or 4 in Fitness or Dance can always be

beneficial but it's not essential. Prior knowledge of how to train bodies is always going to be helpful, but this is something you may decide to do at a later date if you felt it was necessary.

I'm often asked what course I'd do first and my advice would be to do mat before reformer, and then if it's financially and logistically an option with your current work and family commitments the full studio course is great. The more Pilates you study on both the mat and large equipment the better equipped you will be to teach any of them. Pilates is Pilates no matter where you are doing it but it is all linked, the more familiar you are with it the better.

2. The more time you invest, the better the results

When choosing a course there is much to consider. Often courses promote how fast you can complete it for example, you can do a course in just a few weekends but do not underestimate the importance of looking at and understanding the hours required for self-mastery, observation and practice teaching. The absolute best courses are the ones that make sure you practice Pilates yourself,

they require you to spend numerous hours observing experienced instructors and practice teaching. Often this involves hundreds of hours and while you might balk at these hours, they are preparing you for greater success as a teacher. The more Pilates you have done yourself the more familiar you are with the way the exercise feels in your body and the more accurately you are able to program.

By observing other more experienced teachers you can also build an idea of the kind of style you like and may gravitate towards. You also get a more realistic idea of what the industry is like. I find the best instructors are the ones who have not only done detailed courses but who have also spent a long time practising their teaching.

3. Enjoying Pilates doesn't necessitate pursuing a teaching role

At my studios, we teach Pilates as a form of group fitness, which is how most Pilates is taught across the board at present. However, just because you like Pilates doesn't necessarily mean you are going to find it easy to teach and similarly just because you have done your training with a great provider doesn't guarantee you are going to be a great instructor.

Pilates courses will teach you how to deliver an exercise, potentially what words to use and the common mistakes to look out for. You will learn how to progress or regress an exercise, but they don't teach you how to read a room. You will need to watch the room and experienced teachers to learn how to effectively hold a client's attention and how long to spend on an exercise before moving on.

How you make a client feel is the most important part of the class, really they don't care how fancy your flow is or if you did a teaser on a long box two classes in a row! Clients need to feel

welcomed and seen. Some clients like to chat and others don't, some clients want a hundred corrections and some just want to blend in and have an hour to themselves, understanding everyone's needs is one of the most important skills you will learn and it takes time.

In group settings I personally do not believe in over correcting, I like my clients to feel the movements in their bodies and adjust accordingly with generic cues where possible. I will never give more than three corrections to one client in a group class ever. I want them to leave feeling positive and refreshed, free from whatever they came in thinking about, not schooled. Of course, other teachers deliver classes differently but I always believe if our clients are safe and moving they deserve to be recognised for showing up; I believe in motivating and challenging classes.

4. Find a studio that is your vibe

I recommend thinking about the type of studio you would like to work at or own. A lot of studios now teach Pilates as a form of fitness, classes are faster-paced, use music and have minimal corrections to form given to keep the pace of the class flowing. I think this is great, it exposes more people to the beauty of Pilates and allows them a safe low-impact varied form of exercise that gets them great health and fitness benefits. If this is the type of studio you feel aligned with it is worth looking into how much experience you have with group fitness as a whole.

Determine if you want to teach online as well as in person. Teaching online was obviously essential for most of us in the pandemic, but it is still a really valuable way to reach more people especially if you live in more remote areas or want to service a larger area of clients. I made the decision to take a break from online after the lockdowns were over, but it is something I intend on returning to next year occasionally.



5. Teach at various locations to gain experience and exposure to different clients

I really recommend training at lots of different types of facilities or gyms, it gives you confidence in delivering a stronger class if you have been around different group fitness classes. Some of the best exercise variations I have used or cues I give are from training across a broad spectrum of exercise modalities. If you are more passionate about more traditional Pilates – delivered at a slower pace, with more emphasis on correction and form then this is the type of studio you want to aspire to be or work at.

Consider if you want to teach group classes or in a studio setting where you might work in duo's or one on one's. The smaller the class, the more specific your focus, and you can really spend time on an individual's needs, which is so rewarding. You might prefer to work with older clients or more specialised populations and this may require additional training. One-on-ones or semi-privates also require a lot of emotional energy from you so it is wise to not schedule huge volumes of clients in one day especially when starting out.

6. Find a great mentor

Find instructors to shadow who are going to take the time to help you learn how to correct people appropriately in a kind and effective way.

You learn so much from surrounding yourself with great people. My advice is to learn from them but don't try to be them. It's important that you find your own style. This might take a bit of time but it is so worth it.

7. Understand the hours you are likely to teach upfront

Another important thing to consider when deciding to go into the Pilates industry is the hours and schedule you want to work. A lot of people teach Pilates because they love it and they do it on top of their regular income, it could be either a handful of private clients or classes. This is more to supplement existing wages or just for the love of Pilates which is great. If you are planning to go into it full time it is important to be realistic about the hours you work.

Teaching both privates and groups can be really tiring and realistically between 20- 25 sessions a week is the most people can do effectively without burning out. Of course, there are exceptions to this and some people are only able to teach 10 before they find it too much, others can do 30 but it takes a couple of years to find your sweet spot. It would be great if you could teach five classes in a row every day Monday-Friday between 9 and 3 but it's highly unlikely this will happen.

The reality is, especially with studios, instructors are needed early in the morning, into the evening and weekends. It is normal that if you want to teach five classes in a day you may have to have a big break in the middle. If you are teaching private clients this is easier to manage but it still depends on sickness, holidays, kids' health etc.

8. Understand your hourly rate upfront

Some education providers market Pilates instructing as a way to earn huge amounts of money, it is my opinion that if that is why you want to become an instructor you might be very



disappointed. The hourly rate for instructors can be great, but classes still need to be planned in your own time and in order to convert that hourly rate into a good weekly wage you need to be doing a lot of sessions or classes. All of these are important things to consider if you will be relying on Pilates instructing as a full-time wage.

The rate of pay in Australia for example varies a lot from studio to studio and can depend on how many sessions you have in a block. Pay can range from around \$40 AUD a class, to over \$100 AUD per client in private sessions. Obviously, you need to make sure you understand if you are responsible for paying your own tax etc. Remember you will need to arrange your own insurance, this is easy and there are lots of providers but it is an additional annual cost, as is an up-to-date first aid and CPR qualification.

9. Ensure you don't take on too much and get burnt out

Most instructors when they start out take whatever classes they are offered in their desired studio and over time tweak that schedule to suit themselves. Of course, the early mornings and late nights can be hard and sometimes the days are long. Your job is to make people feel better than when they walked into your space and that's a great job to have but the reality is sometimes you may not be having a good day yourself, but you must prioritise your clients.

Learning to manage your schedule is a skill that comes in time but it is really important, even at the very beginning to always give yourself a day off every week, otherwise you will pretty quickly start to experience burnout.

“How you make a client feel is the most important part of the class,...Clients need to feel welcomed and seen...understanding everyone’s needs is one of the most important skills you will learn”



10. When will you find time for your own practice?

A major consideration when becoming an instructor is to think about when you will do your own training and Pilates practice. So many instructors stop doing Pilates when they become an instructor despite the fact that it’s the love of doing Pilates that made them become an instructor in the first place.

I personally still do Pilates most days, even on holiday, I love it. I do mat classes with the clients whilst I teach as I find this is when I am at my most creative in terms of mat flows and reformer I do a couple of times a week at one of my studios. If I am completely honest, I sometimes enjoy going to yoga at our studio more because I don’t feel compelled to listen to all the safety cues and movement instructions and I can just enjoy being there as a yoga student and this is refreshing.

And finally, remember what makes for a great Pilates teacher... you need to understand the class or the session is not about you – it’s about your clients and how they feel, the experience they have when they train with you.

It is important to know that when you start teaching Pilates your relationship will change, it will become your job and sometimes you may need a break from it.

I truly feel so lucky to be able to teach Pilates to people every day, and am truly grateful people trust me with their health and fitness.

Jaime Lake O’Dea has been a Pilates instructor for over 12 years, prior to teaching Pilates she was a personal trainer and a group fitness instructor. Jaime has completed training with a number of different education providers and has trained in both classical and contemporary pilates. She keeps up to date with her continuing education and opened her first studio [The Spring Collective](#) in Sydney’s north, Australia in 2019.

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Need to improve your Reformer class flow?

HOW TO CREATE EFFECTIVE SEQUENCES ON THE REFORMER

by *Anthea Maclean*



We speak with Pilates teacher Anthea Maclean about her approach to sequencing on the Reformer.

My sequencing approach on the Reformer stems from my strong knowledge of the Reformer repertoire or what we might call a sequence of postures. When preparing classes, I'm always utilising my knowledge of working with generalist populations and my in-depth understanding of anatomy to inform how I might approach a sequence. This could look as simple as preparing the body bi-laterally before taking unilaterally loaded movements. In addition, there is always a focus on stabilisation before mobilisation, paying attention to technique and individual movement pattern deviations as well as range of motion whilst addressing important cognitive Pilates principles such as coordination and precision. I try to encourage this level of attention and detail in mind and body for all my clients before adding load or dynamic challenge.

The building blocks of creating an intelligent Pilates sequence in my view are:

1. Attention, clarity and observation of Pilates Principle/s
2. Awareness of movement in the spine and
3. Ensuring a neutral spine and pelvis

I could delve deeper, but that's for those who attend my Master Your Class (MYC) course.

In my opinion, one of the biggest things that creates a well-designed sequence relates to flow. Flow is one of the primary Pilates Principles within Joseph Pilates' Contrology method. Flow absolutely deserves time and space within a reformer class and can create a wonderful equilibrium of stretch and strength that was intended from Pilates as a modality. Initially, I consider two ways of achieving flow...

1. Flow in movement: "comprising of three to four layers within an exercise choice" and
2. Flow energetically: refers to "a feeling within the body or within a class setting and this is created through layering and/or exercise choice."

Teaching Pilates in a modern world encourages a use of flow for a myriad of reasons which if anatomically thought out can offer incredible physical and mindful flow state as well as transformation. However, where flow loses integrity, is when the balance of the class plan is compromised due to the larger focus: 'creating/creative flow' or in other ways using creative choreography without a plan. Balance can be thrown out by any number of variables, ie, lack of attention to alternate Pilates principles, inability to articulate the purpose of the exercise and how you might use flow to layer in progressions, a lack of flexibility with layered flow progressions inhibiting all participants ability to take/find flow and lastly, the lack of attention to creating/restoring balance in the body as a whole within the class plan.

My top tips for instructors looking to improve sequencing on the reformer are:

1. Seek out mentors and further education to increase your knowledge of the physical body. The deeper understanding you have anatomically of what is happening within any exercise movement pattern will only help to heighten your understanding, teaching delivery and skillset to build flow within your Pilates repertoire. We cannot create self-autonomy within the Pilates repertoire without education.



2. Practice TEACHING! Not all instructors are highly proficient Pilates students. This is completely ok, however, I believe, like many career pathways outside of our own, all instructors should be held to a standard of teaching requirements, skills and support pathways to ensure we continue to uphold the systematic principles of Pilates as a modality, irrespective of contemporary interpretations. Similarly, all instructors deserve opportunities for support, pathways for individual improvement and career growth - this as it stands is a pronounced industry gap and falls on our shoulders.

It's important that you seek out workplaces and/or studios that offer Pilates teaching support and structural class plan guidance. This will assist with cementing your teaching strengths and encourage refinement on your weaknesses. I compare it to driving without GPS. Even if you know the general pathway to arrive at your destination, implementing a structural approach to class planning will ensure you don't find yourself lost in your cues or too rooted in routinely chosen pilates postures. Structural support offers balance to the body and insightful contrast to your wrote learned postures or cueing delivery.

1. Pay attention to the spine - a principle I live by in sequencing reformer pilates. Every pilates class should incorporate four movements to the spine: Flexion, Extension, Lateral Flexion and Circumduction. If you are struggling with sequencing classes, start with the spine. Forget the whole class and start with one sequential flow: three to four exercises and one of these movements must include an attention to the spine.



Let's use an example of a flow for Standing Lower Body exercises as an example:

Our target area: External rotators of the hip and spinal mobility
Spring tension: 1x full (R) spring

We would focus on the following flow:

1. Lateral facing standing splits
- 1.2 " add a hip hinge/forward fold on extension of carriage
- 1.3 " add rotation (saw) to platform directed leg
- 1.4 " add optional lateral flexion on return of carriage to stoppers and/or end range effort pulse to lower extremity in hip hinge forward fold

By working in this way we can get so much more out of a flowing sequence for your clients and for you as the teacher too.

Anthea Maclean is a Classical and Contemporary Pilates Teacher from Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Anth has been teaching for six years and studied Pilates initially through Elixir School of Pilates (ESOP).

Anth created the Master Your Class workshop almost a year ago now, after she felt lost within her career and wanting more from the industry. Her MYC course helps teachers to quality control their own teaching skills and toolkit in an effort to encourage refinement, beyond their qualification. To find out more visit [@repertoirepilates](https://www.instagram.com/repertoirepilates)

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Good muscles vs Bad muscles

YOUR GOOD INTENTIONS MIGHT BE LEADING TO UNINTENDED RESULTS

by **Cody Jussell**

The fitness industry seems to have a love/hate relationship with certain muscles. We create narratives around these ideas like, it's always good to feel the abs but never good to feel the neck, or never use the upper traps because they are overactive and causing neck pain, or always work the glutes because they are asleep... abs good! Neck bad. Lower and mid traps good! Upper traps bad. Glutes good! Hip flexors bad. So, where do we get these ideas from and do they have any foundation in the broader scientific literature? And while our intentions might be good are we unnecessarily creating harmful narratives and fear avoidant behaviours in our clients when we talk about muscles like this? Let's explore where some of these ideas might come from and how we might create different narratives for our clients.

What exactly do we mean when we say or think about a muscle being good or bad? I'm sure we all mean slightly different things when we think it (or maybe we're just saying stuff and don't actually know what exactly we mean), but a common belief is that specific muscles tend to be prone to "overworking" and others are prone to being "inhibited". Where do these beliefs come from? And what does overactive or inhibited actually mean?

The broad definition of an "overactive" muscle is a hypertonic muscle or a muscle that has more tone than is optimal for comfortable and controlled movement. Hypertonia can occur for a variety of reasons including but not limited to stroke, traumatic brain injury (TBI), brain tumour, neurodegenerative process like multiple sclerosis (MS) or Parkinson's, or neurodevelopmental events like cerebral palsy (CP). Or maybe we mean something more like the "overactive" muscle is more likely to work when it shouldn't be working. We've all been that person or had that client that asks if they should feel the movement being done in a certain place. For example, in an upper chest curl, are we supposed to feel the abs or the neck? Yes, as in, both, mostly likely! So, when we say "overactive" do we mean "enhanced excitability"?

What do we mean when we say "inhibited"? The broad definition of muscle inhibition is muscle hypotonia. Hypotonia is different from muscle weakness but can be associated with weakness. Or are we talking about arthrogenic muscle inhibition, which has been clinically observed in patients after a traumatic injury like an ACL tear or reconstruction where the muscles around an injured joint may lack adequate sensory/afferent information and



therefore produce altered motor/efferent muscle output? Why harp on definitions you ask? Well, in my very unscientific observations, we tend to say things without questioning the underlying credibility of the concepts that form the foundation of the beliefs and protocols around those things. Is there any way that a muscle can become inhibited or overactive outside of the above definitions? Probably. Does it mean our glutes aren't working if we don't feel them working? Probably not. Do we mean muscle imbalance when we say inhibited or overactive? Maybe.

In Pilates, most of our beliefs around muscle imbalance come from the work of Vladimir Janda, a Czech physiotherapist who believed we could visually identify muscle imbalances by assessing static postural tendencies, manual muscle testing, and identifying "faulty" movement patterns.

Many of Janda's muscle imbalance studies rely on the observation that certain muscles which "weren't supposed to be firing" were in fact firing and others weren't firing when they should be firing as measured by EMG. But, the idea that there is a consistent and ideal firing pattern for a specific movement is currently unsupported in the literature.

Janda's theories are a very tempting narrative to deliver to our clients. They feel like they should make sense. It would certainly make programming easy if postural analysis could quickly direct us to which muscles we needed to strengthen and which ones we needed to stretch to reduce injury risk and improve function, (a tenuous theory itself). As well intentioned as we may be, if we create narratives for our clients around muscles they should work and muscles they shouldn't work we run the risk of creating fear

avoidant behaviours in our clients, which may do more harm than good.

Instead of looking for the magical protocol that we can apply to our clients in pain, we should encourage them to keep moving and deliver programming that helps them move towards their goals in ways that feel meaningful to them. For example, if you notice someone has an anterior pelvic tilt it doesn't necessarily mean their hip flexors need to be stretched. It's not a bad thing if they feel the hip flexors working in a movement like leg lowers (in fact the dirty little secret of leg lowers is that you have to use your hip flexors). Or if someone has rounded shoulders it isn't a sign that they should avoid feeling their upper traps in arm movements. Strengthening the upper traps might actually be helpful for someone with neck pain. Similarly, if someone feels their neck working in a chest lift it might just be because their neck isn't particularly strong, not necessarily because their abs are weak. Rather than looking at someone's posture and concluding that they should stretch certain muscles and work others, we should focus on strengthening the whole body through progressive loading.

The Pilates industry needs to move past outdated narratives. Muscles aren't good or bad even when we look at how muscles contribute to postural tendencies or pain, and muscles likely don't become inhibited or overactive without serious pathology present. Don't let feeling the neck in a chest lift, the hip flexors in a leg lower, or the upper traps in arm movement stop your clients from getting stronger. As Pilates instructors it is our responsibility and obligation to create informed narratives of resilience for our clients. We can do this by constantly evaluating our language, methods, beliefs, and actions. Ask yourself why you cue a movement the way you do, why you think it's bad to feel your upper traps, where you got the idea that the glute max is inhibited and don't be satisfied with the answer "my teacher taught it that way". Seek out answers to these questions based on evidence and choose your mentors carefully. I know I'm asking a lot, but I also have faith that we can evolve together for the betterment of the industry.



Anatomy of Pilates helps Pilates instructors feel more confident teaching people with pain and injury through anatomy and post-rehab courses, workshops, and 1:1 coaching.

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Hiring the right people

HOW DO YOU HIRE FOR THE RIGHT FIT AT YOUR STUDIO? FIND OUT SOME TOP TIPS ON THE SORTS OF SKILLS TO LOOK OUT FOR.

by **Katrina Edwards**

When hiring for your studio, it can be easy to fall into the trap of who is available at this point in time. However, the question is are they the right fit for your studio?

What is your process for hiring incredible staff? How do you find staff whom the clients love that end up staying with you for a length of time?

The Pilates Journal spoke with the Founder of National Pilates Training and Aligned for Life Pilates studios in Victoria, Australia Katrina Edwards about what she's looking for when potentially hiring great staff.

She explained "In my many years of hiring teachers for our Aligned for life pilates studios, the Top 10 things I look for include a:

1. Thirst for knowledge- a curiosity and drive to seek answers and deliberately build professional expertise and grow personally.
2. Authenticity – genuinely interested in creating meaningful relationships with peers and people.

3. Purpose - an openness to learning new things and a willingness to find meaning in the repertoire or activity choices that are relevant and meaningful to the client. To have the ability to teach with purpose and intent. To be interested in finding the links between life and the exercise.

4. Persistence – a curiosity to step through a situation/task when presented with a challenge.

5. Creativity – courage and willingness to explore new ways of doing things, keeping what works and discarding what doesn't.

6. Commitment – prioritising personal health, fitness and self care including embracing the practise of the pilates method right down its core as a mind-body practise

7. Rapport – centred and grounded, self awareness, self regulation, perception of others. When you step into this space you start to understand the truth about what it takes to build a meaningful relationship where a client feels safe and confident enough to let go of holding patterns and here is where the real work can begin.

8. Independence and autonomy – an ability to drive the self and pursue expertise.

9. Generosity - a genuine passion for wanting to help people understand their own bodies building confidence in themselves as they learn to move more efficiently

10. Tolerance– a selfless attitude and a want to share and help others.

In order to find these skills, I would recommend starting with a conversation in a non-biased setting, for example at a coffee shop, followed by an opportunity to observe the studio in action, a session with you as the owner and then for the interviewee to take a fellow staff member through a session. Through this process, there is an opportunity to gain a true sense of whether there is the right fit or not.

In our studios, we don't set a trial period but rather step new recruits through the process and start building of shifts and working at the process together.

My top three tips when hiring would be:

- 1) take a risk,
- 2) be authentic, and
- 3) reward effort, everything else can be learned.

And remember 'it takes two to tango!'

Katrina Edwards oversees three boutique fully equipped Pilates studios known as Aligned For Life Pilates in Melbourne, Australia and is the Founder and Director of National Pilates Training.

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Creative workouts using the Jumpboard

WANT TO CREATE MORE DYNAMIC, CREATIVE AND FUN JUMPBOARD CLASSES THAT HAVE LAYERS AND RESPECT THE FUNDAMENTALS – READ ON.

by Kylie McGuiggan



How confident do you feel about running a Jumpboard class?

I feel like that sometimes our Jumpboard workouts often tend to be the same same leaving us in a bit of a Jumpboard slump and the clients knowing exactly what is coming next!!! For some reason, the Jumpboard can just stump us as teachers!

But in my view, using the Jumpboard can be a fun and fabulous point of difference that can be sprinkled into your classes to create dynamic, creative and some seriously Sweaty Betty workouts - if that's your thing, because if your clients are like mine then they genuinely love it when the Jumpboard comes out so it's time to level up the Jump game people!!

At Pilates on Point we have a signature express class called 'Just Jump' so I like to keep this class on the go with a creative flare while also making achievable for our clients. This is where props really come into the game!! Props will make your Jumpboard classes pop so get them ready to go.

Before I share some creative ideas with the Jumpboard, it's important to note that the next lot of exercises that are mentioned are built and then layered from foundation Jumpboard moves.

Creating the Creative Jumpboard flow- here's a snapshot of some of my go to favourites.

The Side Lying Series

- stacked on the knee (all on a medium spring – bearing in mind the spring choice will be different for each client)

Stacked on one knee and one forearm and rebounding from the jumpboard, this is a nice switch up and a serious challenge when it comes to balance and levels up your jump game from the more traditional move of side lying on the shoulder and hip using the ball as a pillow prop. Once your client's form is on point and your confidence is brimming then add the side crunch by bringing the elbow to knee. Great for those lateral glutes, balance and core and also that side waist sizzle.

To advance: Let's see if we can add in a weight and punch the weight to the sky whilst balancing that single-leg jump!!

· Side lying- stacked on elbow with pilates soft ball between ankles and

Jump with both feet away from the jumpboard and squeeze that ball. Once you are in control then add the double side leg lift,

finally let's add that side crunch in again and send your elbow to hip.

· The Grand Finale creative move for the side lying series- Stacked on Elbow with ball in the top hand to begin. Scissor split the legs and tap the ball to the bottom leg as it reaches forward.

The Side Series using the Longbox

We start facing side on - using the ball under your ribs, your hand can be on headrest or elbow on box.

There are so many options here so I'll make it brief:

- With your forearm on the headrest, Double leg straight jump, side leg lift
- Up on your forearm on top of the box you can do Single leg straight jump, Knee pull, Side crunch with elbow and knee again, side leg lift, kick fwd and back or circles, etc.
- But a favourite of mine when your forearm is on the headrest is:- top arm has the ball to the ceiling, double leg jump away (squeezing inner thighs together) from the jumpboard and add a teeny side crunch by bringing the ball to the ankles and using the side waist!

To layer up your creative flare- add in the side scissor split again, bringing the ball between the legs.

So as you can see, we are levelling up the Jumpboard game but we are also building on the foundations of the same moves already completed prior without the box. Obviously if you have clients that have balance issues then you would stick with these moves on the bed and omit the box altogether.

--- Advanced Side Series: Stacked on the knee on the Longbox – (bottom hand is on the shoulder block behind you)

These moves are similar to the moves completed on the bed without the box however using a lower spring would now be advisable. You can always go higher again once you're feeling comfortable. Exercise ideas include:- Single straight leg jump, Side Lying Swing, Knee Pull, Side Crunch with elbow to knee, Side Leg lift etc. Again, we are adding our creativity flare to the mix by using our props but keeping the moves fairly similar so repetition assists us through.

· Single Arm work with weight- Sitting facing side on Push away from Jumpboard using a single arm whilst other arm punches weight to the sky. Sit as close to the edge of the box, close to the jumpboard as you can.

Three and two Point kneeling on the Longbox

(facing the risers)

Start by setting up in your quadruped set up ready to work your single leg. Have the Pilates soft ball under one hand and as you jump away using a single leg jump (opposite leg), press down into the ball. This is great for the glutes, shoulder, balance and core and a total game changer!!

When you think your balance needs a challenging shift, remove the ball and set up in your two point position. Jump using only a single leg and a single arm.

Various Abdominal work on the Longbox

(with the Pilates soft ball under back of ribs)

Start with something simple like an abdominal (ab) crunch with the hands behind head and a double knee tuck jump, then add wide leg splits, adding in your various arm movements to

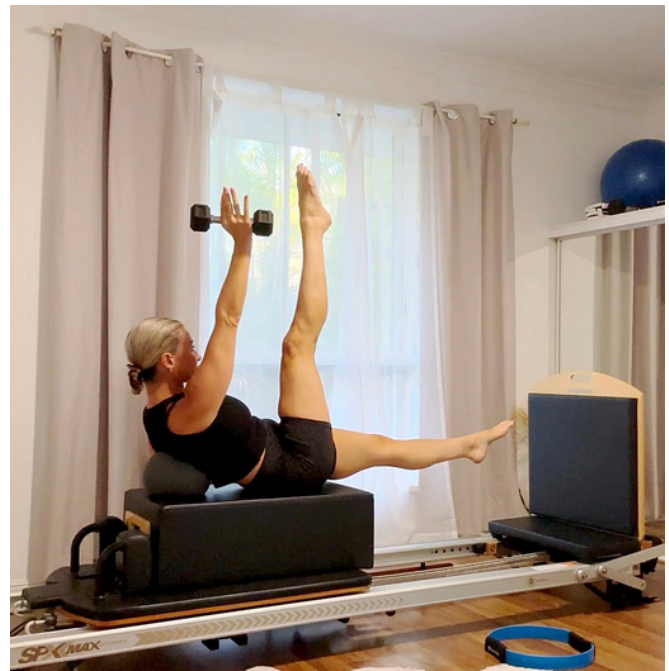


challenge balance and form, single leg jump with free leg like a candle stick too the sky. Now lets add weights into the mix and contract your abdominals by bringing your arms with weight to your ankles. You can also do a single arm punch to sky with single leg kick to the sky for another variation and for your Grand Finale ab move- try balancing on the ball in your deep ab scoop set up and completing Peter Pan.

These are just some of my creative go-to moves I use in my classes to keep things fun, energetic and always a challenge no matter how long you have been doing Jumpboard for.

All moves can be paired back if needed or dialled up, props removed or props added. Some may be for you, some may not be for you. Having creative classes is my jam, I love, I thrive on it but I never add it to my classes just for the sake of it or to make the class look pretty. If we can't achieve the foundational move then the fancy creative layer does not get added in. SIMPLE.

For me the biggest thing as a teacher and as a studio owner is this... 'Read the room and always know your clients.' This is crucial not just to deliver a great class for all but for every single individual to leave your class feeling accomplished in their Pilates moves!



Kylie is the owner of Pilates on Point in the Gold Coast, Queensland Australia and features regularly on Dynamic Pilates TV. You can find online POP classes here.

[You can watch Kylie's flow here.](#)

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Supporting your vocal health

HEAR FROM A VOCAL COACH ON HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR VOICE WHEN TEACHING

by Paige Walker

When you answer the question “ what do you do” you most probably answer “I’m a pilates instructor.” With the knowledge of the body, the muscles, the exercises, the importance of each movement- that is a fair title. Do you know what else you are? A vocalist. Your work, as an instructor, cannot be done without the constant use of your voice. Yet, so little is considered in our training to do this work. Why is that? What do we not know? How do we connect to this thing that we have so little thought about or understanding of?

Why is the voice such a foreign concept to us- and, why are we so afraid of it?

The voice is our most powerful resource, it is how we communicate to the outside world our thoughts, ideas, knowledge, wisdom, passion and personality. Is it so terrifying to offer your voice to someone because it is the truest form of ‘you’ put forward? How do you find your courage to speak all day long, and with authority?

To understand the voice, you must also understand the care and health of the instrument. The breath is one of the key factors at play. If you have short, shallow breathing then your voice is going to be under constant strain, you are pushing the sound out rather than letting it flow easily on a continuous stream of air. Shorter breaths also stress the body, a stressed body stresses the voice so it all becomes cyclical. Longer, deeper breaths calm the body, calm the voice and it also allows longer phrases to be spoken. A longer phrase is easier for the listener to understand the context and meaning.

Where does this breath stem from? You will have heard of the term ‘diaphragm’ before, of course. But to have a voice that is totally supported, it needs to ride on a breath that actually begins in another area very familiar to pilates gurus- the pelvic floor. Breathing is automatic, no? Yes- but, no. As you know, good breathing technique is critical to your pelvic floor health. We discuss the positive use of the pelvic floor all the time in pilates. We discuss what to do if your pelvic floor is compromised, but do we examine how coordinating the breath with the pelvic floor, not only, can help reduce pain and increase flexibility- but can also greatly improve your overall vocal health.



So, how does it all tie together?

Breathing that begins in the pelvic floor allows you to speak on a supported breath. That also allows for perfect projection, no longer needing to push the voice out, straining the neck muscles and vocal cords. A properly projected voice allows you to have access to that voice when you need it and want it because you are caring for it and using it in its most functional way. A voice that is supported, with less straining of the cords, means that the voice will be much less likely to get fatigued as quickly and a less fatigued voice means less possibility of nodes and other voice related damage and injury. You must recognise your voice as another muscle in the body and treat it as such. If one of your clients came to you with a rotator cuff injury, you would modify the exercises that person may do in class to avoid further injury. Consider that the vocal cords are the same, but rather than ‘after care’ begin to think more along the lines of ‘long term’ and ‘preventative care’.

To begin to link voice and pelvic floor there are some easy exercises to do that you can start to add into your daily routine until they become muscle memory. A lot of people feel silly when they are asked to do any sort of vocal warm up if they are not vocally trained -I would ask you to be as brave as your new clients who come to class for the first time and feel totally out of their depth. We encourage them to stick with it and soon enough, they are reaping the benefits. And, again, with the idea of reframing the voice as a muscle, it may be easier for you to imagine.

Exercise one; stand with your feet hip distance, keeping your spine nice and long, hands relaxed by your sides. Take a few cleansing breaths- allowing any tension to run out of the body and mind, remembering that any tension in the body will run straight into your voice.

Exercise two; once you feel at ease in your body focus on a tuneless hum, lips together/teeth apart. This is a hum, just for you- it does not need to reach the outer corners of the room. This is how you begin any vocal warm up because it prepares the cords for use. Hum for, at least, a minute. As you become more familiar with these exercises you can do this hum as you prepare for your class or moving through your day, as needed.

Exercise three; find your diaphragmatic breathing, allowing the belly and ribs to expand on the inhale. As you begin the exhale, very gently, engage the pelvic floor 10 to 15 percent and let it stay engaged until it is time to refill. This is your supported breath. Do this five or six times, until you are not needing to think about it as consciously, and then rather than just the breath being released, begin to add a tone to the breath.

You will notice how much longer the tone lasts without the need to push it out. After you feel that connection begin with small blocks of dialogue (talking) until you connect breath and voice as one component, working effortlessly together. It may feel a little like patting your head and rubbing your belly for a little while but soon enough it will be as normal as any other movement pattern you do.

The more you do this work, the more you will recognise yourself for the vocalist that you are and the voice as your ally.

Paige Walker has been a voice coach in Australia for 23 years working locally and internationally in film, television, theatre and with movement instructors. She understands the demand placed on the voice as an instructor, as well as the fear that speaking can invoke and aims to create the most positive relationship possible with your most powerful resource; your voice. You can find out more [here](#).



[Hear more from Paige here](#)

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Instructor Spotlight: Renee Hambly

WE SPEAK WITH PILATES INSTRUCTOR RENEE HAMBLY ABOUT HER PILATES CAREER AND HER TEACHING FOCUS

Q. Tell us a little about yourself and your Pilates background?

A. I'm Renee Hambly and I live in the Sunshine Coast in Queensland Australia. I have over 6 years experience as a Pilates instructor. My friends often call me a "pocket rocket" for my boundless energy. I also was a finalist in the 2023 AusActive Pilates Professional of the Year.

Q. How did you discover Pilates?

A. I discovered Pilates following a spinal injury at the age of 12, a setback from my figure skating career. The remarkable power of Pilates played a pivotal role in my recovery and healing, igniting my enduring love for this method.

Q. How do you keep learning? What inspires you in your work?

A. I find inspiration from the global Pilates community, my colleagues, and my clients. Continually learning about the diverse bodies that cross my path and witnessing my clients' resilience consistently inspires me to delve deeper into my practice.

Q. The best advice you were ever given as a teacher...

A. The best advice I received as a teacher was to focus on "practicing progressions, not perfection." This guidance emphasised that preparing for real-life situations and adaptable alignment is more valuable than fixating on perfect form. It shifted my teaching approach, allowing for a more holistic and flexible perspective on Pilates instruction.

Q. Is there something you try and instil in each of your clients?

A. In my classes, I aim to inspire clients to embrace gratitude for the remarkable abilities of their bodies, creating a deeper connection with their physical selves and a positive perspective on their Pilates journey.



Photography: The Pilates Space

Q. The best Pilates course you ever did was...

A. My most valuable Pilates learning experiences have extended beyond formal courses, such as my Diploma in Contemporary Pilates and Teaching Methodology. It was the mentorship and guidance I received during this course that truly enriched my teaching. These mentors helped me delve into more extensive cueing techniques and applying Pilates movements to real-life situations, taking my knowledge beyond the confines of textbooks and workbooks.

Q. What's your favourite piece of equipment to use with clients in studio and why?

A. The reformer is my favoured piece equipment in the studio, offering versatility and ease of instruction in a group setting. Why? Its adaptability, with adjustable springs, enables the seamless transition from simple to complex exercises, making it a choice that promotes inclusivity for a wide range of clients.

Q. How do you stay motivated?

A. I maintain my motivation and consistency by prioritising my own practice and play, ensuring that I set aside time for both. Additionally, I continually expand my knowledge by learning from sources beyond the Pilates world, allowing me to introduce fresh and engaging elements into my Pilates practice. I've always been dedicated to always learning and growing and that's why I like to dive into a mix of influences beyond Pilates. Whether it's picking up mobility

tips from specialists, weaving in strength and conditioning techniques, embracing yoga for that mindful touch, or teaming up with movement gurus — my goal is to bring this diverse blend into my teaching. It's not just Pilates; it's a dynamic fusion that I love sharing with my clients for a holistic experience.

Plus the ever-evolving landscape of movement challenges on social media provides a constant source of inspiration and growth.

Q. What makes you laugh the most?

A. The little things in life, like my dog having the zoomies, bring genuine laughter and wholesome moments into my days.

Q. What's your favourite way to spend a day off?

A. On my day off, my favourite way to spend it is by embarking on adventures and exploring new places, often in the company of my beloved little pooch, Trixie.

Q. How many pairs of grip socks do you own?

A. I've accumulated so many grip socks that I've lost count — definitely more grippy socks than regular ones! Funny fact, when The Pilates Space first opened, sock sales were mostly thanks to me. Additionally, I'm a fan of the stretch band; I absolutely love a good stretch.

Q. Does your family 'really know' what's involved in your job?

A. Absolutely, my family understands the immense joy I experience when my clients achieve their goals. They've witnessed moments when I bring my work home, engrossed in intensive class planning and continuous learning. They know that I rarely have a moment to myself, until I have a short break in between classes, and that I don't stop until I walk out of the studio.



Renee works for Inflow Pilates Studios, Queensland Australia and is a Class Choreography contributor.

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Upcoming courses

BASI AUSTRALIA

The Mat Program , Mat and Reformer Program and Comprehensive Global Program are now offered in
Brisbane- BASI Pilates Academy Australia - 23 Feb to 16 June 2024, 3rd Feb- 5 May Manly, Sydney and 1 Mar- 23 Jun - Sunshine Coast.
2024 - Canberra coming soon!

Find out more basipilates.com.au/education/.

BODY ORGANICS EDUCATION

[Springing this joint](#) - Brisbane - 24-25 May, Canberra 22-23 June. Melbourne TBC. Sydney - Aug/Sept.

Programming - Brisbane - 23-24 March and Sydney 18-19 May.

Towering - Brisbane - 17 May (2 hours) and online as part of the Movers and Shakers series with @movementalityeducation

A full event calendar can be found [here](#).

[The Pilates Vibe](#) are now running Body Organics Mat, Reformer and Comprehensive Courses in Melbourne.

Find out more www.bodyorganicseducation.com or contact info@bodyorganicseducation.com

REACH MOVEMENT HEALTH

Further your education with one of Reach's online masterclass sessions.

Join Sally Anderson between Feb-Nov 2024 on the first Saturday of each month for a live online Reformer and Matwork class followed by Q&A. Courses also available in Pilates for Pregnancy, Visceral Mobilisation, LumboPelvic Rhythm with Lisa Jackson and or Pilates for Multi-Dimensional Posture and more.

Find out more reachmovementhealth.com/continuing-education-programs-2023/

PILATES ITC

(10838NAT) Diploma of Pilates Instruction, Matwork and Reformer + Small Apparatus Pathway, Reformer and Small Apparatus Pathway, Matwork and Small Apparatus Pathway, Studio Instruction Pathway, Anatomy + Physiology (Online only), (10839NAT) Advanced Diploma of the Pilates Method.

Upcoming Blended Entry Points:

WA and NSW: Enrol now for Matwork starting in February.
BALLINA (NEW): Enrol now for Matwork starting in March.
WA and TAS and SA: Enrol now for Reformer in April.
NSW: Enrol for Reformer in July.
QLD: Enrol for Matwork in June.
TAS: Enrol for Matwork in September.
All States: Advanced Diploma – enrol and start any time.

[Continuing Education](#): Scolio-Pilates® Modules 1 & 2 of the Scolio-Pilates Professional Certification Program in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney in 2024.

Give the Pilates ITC Careers Team a call on (08) 9330 4570 to secure your place - pilatesitc.edu.au/



@lowimpactfit

POLESTAR PILATES

Upcoming Continuing Education Courses include:

[Mini Conference with Alexander Bohlander- Feb 2024](#)

Courses include:

Healing Touch - Melbourne 2 Feb, Sydney 9 Feb
Pilates for The Back - Melbourne 3 Feb, Sydney 10 Feb
Meet Spinefitter - Online via zoom - 3 Feb
Neuroplasticity - Melbourne 4 Feb, Sydney 11 Feb

Pilates for Chronic Lower Back Pain Online Course - available anytime
Online Masterclass series - available anytime

For a complete list of courses see the Polestar website polestarpilates.edu.au/pilates-continuing-education/

STOTT PILATES

STOTT PILATES® Intensive Matwork and Intensive Reformer Courses to be held in 2024 at Innaessence studio in Queensland, Australia.

Intensive Matwork Course – 30 Jan - 7 Feb 2024.
Intensive Reformer Course – 8-18 Feb 2024.

Upcoming courses

NATIONAL PILATES TRAINING

National Pilates Training (21719) offers the following government-accredited skill sets and qualifications

Groupfit professional pilates Instruction
 Professional pilates matwork Instruction
 Professional pilates reformer instruction
 Diploma of professional pilates instruction (10838NAT)
 Advanced Diploma of the pilates method (10839NAT)

Our government-accredited courses are available in person - Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, Hervey Bay, Morisset- NSW, Ballarat- Victoria, online only – global.

2024 intakes include:

- Melbourne, 24 Feb
- Canberra, 1 Mar
- NSW - Hunters Hill, 9 Mar
- VIC - Greensborough, 5 Apr and more dates on the website.

National Pilates Training has courses starting each month, in person, in a location near you and all courses are available online wherever you are. Find out more www.nationalpilates.com.au/



STUDIO PILATES

Studio Pilates offers a number of different courses including:

Matwork Course, Reformer Course, Matwork Programming and Progressions, Platinum Instructing Course, Anatomy Course, Wunda Chair Course, Ball, Circle and Band Course and more.

Those in the USA and UK can join one of their online courses via zoom.

For a complete list of dates in other states see the Studio Pilates website studiopilates.com/education/book-a-course/

TENSEGRITY TRAINING

Cert IV in Contemporary Pilates and Teaching Methodology
 Cert IV of Contemporary Pilates and Teaching Methodology (52855WA) with Reformer (Cert IV and Reformer)
 Integrated Diploma of Contemporary Pilates and Teaching Methodology
 Pilates Group Reformer Instructor Training (PGR)

Tensegrity offers training in NSW, QLD, VIC, SA and TAS.

For a full list of dates in all states visit tensegritytraining.com.au/accredited-training/

BODYLOVE ACADEMY

Autumn 2024 Reformer Pilates Course Dates

May 3 (Fri) Anatomy Course *Separate Enrolment, May 4-5 (Sat-Sun), May 11-12 (Sat-Sun), May 25-26 (Sat-Sun) and June 1-2 (Sat-Sun), SYD.

Both part-time and intensive courses are available throughout the year. Accredited with Fitness Australia and ESSA.

Find out more <https://bodylove.academy/>

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