

Fitness **F**ocus...**P**urely **P**ilates

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What is Pilates? Pilates is a method of holistic movement created by Joseph Pilates developed during the early 1900's. It is a sequence of exercises designed to strengthen the muscles from the core of the body. On a deeper level the principle of the method was intended to be used and applied to everyday activities, hence increasing one's longevity. Today there are many versions of Pilates, either Classical or Contemporary. There is only one Pure Classical Pilates Method, which is Joe's method.

Due to the popularity of the exercises and its' results many variations of the method have created the Contemporary method. This includes classes that mix yoga and Pilates exercises into a single class. An example would be the popular Yogalates class format. Classical Pilates is a full body workout which requires concentration and engages the body, breath and soul.

A Pilates workout can be done either in a traditional mat class or a private / semi private session utilizing Pilates apparatus. The most common piece of apparatus is the reformer. Other pieces of equipment include the Cadillac, Wunda Chair, Barrels, and Magic Circles. In private Classical Pilates sessions one would combine mat exercises and the equipment, working the body through a system of sequential exercises. Each exercise was designed so that it could be executed on each piece of equipment. The equipment helps place the body in the correct position and provides resistance, hence allowing the person to control the movement. The most difficult set of exercises are those performed on the mat. While very similar to those performed on the equipment, which provides assistance, the mat requires one to rely solely on their own internal strength. A combination of both mat and equipment sessions complement each other and provide the best overall results. It is recommended that you participate in the exercise twice a week.

There are many benefits of the Pilates Method.

- It strengthens and lengthens the muscles
- Helps improve and maintain good posture
- Improves flexibility & balance
- Increases body awareness
- Increases Core strength which allows better execution of other athletic and daily activities that you participate in

In all my years of teaching and training people, I strongly believe that everyone can benefit from Pilates. Pilates is for the young and old, strong and weak, male and female. The exercises can be modified or challenging based on individual needs. Joseph Pilates had a saying: "In 10 sessions you feel the difference, in 20 sessions you see the difference and in 30 sessions you will have a whole new body."

