

Managing Director turned Pilates Coach:

I began my working life as a Commodity Trader. I progressed to become the Managing Director of a large division of a major PLC. After more than twenty years of business experience, with all its attendant rewards and stresses, I decided to change my life. Now I am a qualified Pilates Coach. A Pilates Coach with a vision that I am determined to turn into reality – to open an exclusive retreat somewhere in Southern Europe that will be a haven of health and relaxation.

I have always taken my health seriously, and kept reasonably fit, but a major back operation in my mid twenties left me with residual spine issues and subsequent knee problems as well. Running and yoga were for many years my preferred form of exercise. Then I began to hear reports about the amazing benefits of Pilates and was intrigued. Having already decided to leave the corporate world to work on my plan for the retreat, I wanted to increase my knowledge of different fitness regimes. That's when I embarked on a 4 day per week, 6hours per day, 12 months programme to learn about the art and the scientific background of the Josef H. Pilates exercise form.

What I have discovered is that Pilates a brilliant base for anyone, young or old, injured or fit, to either build a strong foundation or to maintain and improve fitness and wellbeing. Pilates is a structured form of exercise that is logical, effective, energy efficient, highly focused and teaches correct breathing and body posture. Increased strength and flexibility, an elongated spine and a general sense of well-being and body confidence are all benefits of this unique form of exercise.

What is Pilates

Pilates is an 'intelligent' exercise developed by Josef Hubertus Pilates during and after World War I to assist bed-ridden patients to recover muscle strength after injury. The system employs specialised, simple machines using springs to teach body awareness and strengthen muscles without straining them, in a way that is complete and balanced. Many of these exercises can also be converted to mat work.

The story of Josef Pilates is a fascinating one. As a child Pilates suffered numerous ailments, including asthma and rickets. He became interested in anatomy and fanatical about fitness, so much so that by the age of 14 he was in shape to model for anatomy charts. Yoga was also a big influence.

He first came to England from Germany in 1912 – legend has it that he arrived either as a boxer or circus performer. Still here at the outbreak of WWI he was interned on the Isle of Man where he began to use his knowledge to help nurse his fellow internees as well as to teach karate and self-defence. To aid rehabilitation of bed-bound patients he began to devise imaginative resistance-training equipment, using bed springs and straps, which became the foundation for the development of later equipment.

At the end of the war Pilates went back to Germany, then emigrated to the States with his wife. They set up a studio in New York and continued to work together. The New York ballet community embraced Pilates as a method of building strength, suppleness and elongation of muscles, while avoiding bulk. Pilates died in 1967 at the age of 87. In recent years Pilates has again found favour, this time beyond the world of dance with anyone who wants to achieve fitness in a balanced and gentle way.

Pilates has proven beneficial for the rehabilitation of injuries and slowing down of osteoporosis, and also helps aid digestion. It is an exercise that can be adopted for anyone, young or old.

Josef H. Pilates describes his exercise as follows:

The basis of the Pilates Method is the art of Contrology® (a word coined by Pilates himself). "It is the conscious control of all muscular movements in the body. It is the correct utilisation and application of the leverage principles afforded by the bones comprising the skeletal framework of the body, a complete knowledge of the mechanism of the body, and a full understanding of the principles of equilibrium and gravity as applied to the movements of the body in motion, at rest and in sleep." –

Josef H. Pilates



Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
7		RAC					
8		RAC					
9		RAC					RAC
10		RAC					RAC
11		RAC					RAC
12		RAC					RAC
13		RAC					RAC
14		RAC					
15		RAC					
16		RAC					
17		RAC	RAC	RAC			
18		RAC	RAC	RAC			
19		RAC	RAC	RAC			
20		RAC	RAC	RAC			
21		RAC	RAC	RAC			

Times when I am generally available at the RAC are indicated on the table. All other times are usually taken up with Business Mentoring and Consulting. Private appointments for Pilates can be made by arrangement for these times if I am available. A Pilates class for beginners is scheduled at the RAC in January and February – ask at the Sports Reception Desk 020 77473365. One to One classes can be 1h or 1 ½ hours long. 'The Pilates Place' is affiliated to 'Pilates International', London. Pilates Teacher Training Certificate, First Aid Certificate and / or the Insurance Certificate are available on request.

The Pilates Place

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