

# THE PILATES JOURNAL



## Recovering after injury

### WHY DOES JOINT MOBILITY MATTER

Get clear on why mobility training  
can level up your teaching

### SUPPORTING A HAMSTRING INJURY

Understand differing hamstring  
injuries and how to treat them

### OPENING A SECOND STUDIO

Hear the pros and cons of  
opening a second studio



*Feature your product or  
business here. Contact us  
for more information.*

# Contents

2

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to another edition of the Pilates Journal.

6

## HEALING KNEE PAIN WITH CLASSICAL PILATES

For a movement specialist, it's a chance to turn an injury into an opportunity for growth.

9

## STRAINING THE FRIENDSHIP

Hear about treatment and suitable exercises from a Pilates perspective to promote optimal healing.

12

## THE MISSING LINK FOR PILATES TEACHERS

Understand why joint mobility education is essential for every Pilates Instructor.

14

## FITNESS REFORMER CLASSES ARE GOOD FOR THE INDUSTRY

EDITORIAL: Why Group Fitness Reformer classes are good for the Pilates industry.

16

## PROGRESS YOUR PUSH UP ON THE REFORMER

Kylie McGuiggan walks through the steps to progress to Push Ups on the Reformer.

18

## MAKING YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS THRIVE

Understand how to make your online Pilates business a success with some simple strategies.

22

## THE POWER OF PILATES AND PRE NATAL CARE

Pregnancy is a superpower. Rethinking how we work with Pregnant and Postnatal bodies.



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.

# Contents

25

## TREATING THE WHOLE BODY

Alexandra Bohlinger explains her approach and why treating the whole body is essential.

28

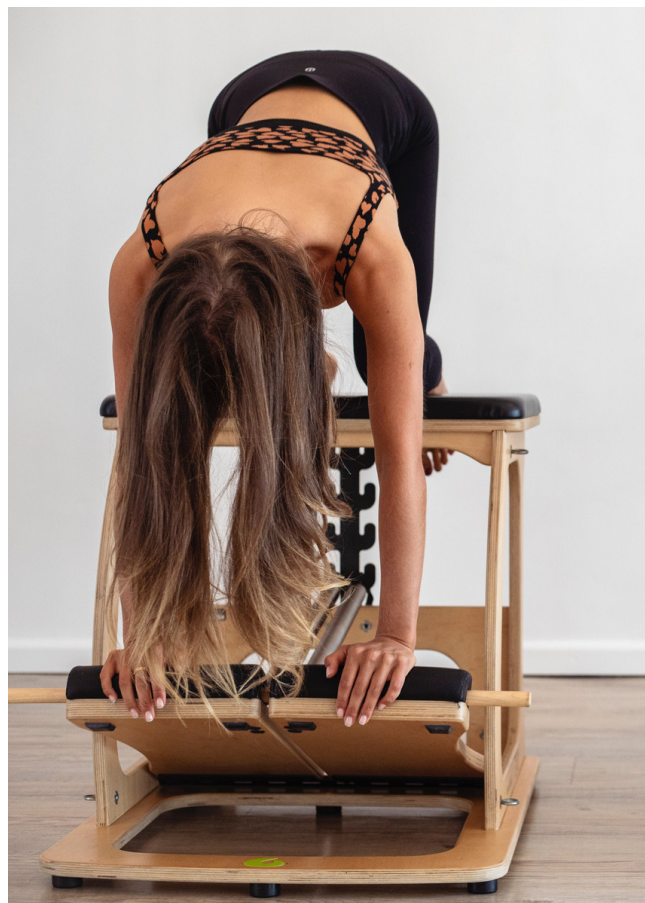
## INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT: JORGA PURDIE

Meet Pilates Instructor Jorga Purdie from Aligned for Life Pilates Studio.

30

## GROW YOUR BUSINESS TO OWN A SECOND STUDIO

Understand the pros and cons of owning a second business.



Reach your full potential.  
Advertise your business here.

[pilatesjournal.com](http://pilatesjournal.com)



# Note from the Editor



## *Welcome to the latest issue of The Pilates Journal.*

In this issue, we hear how US Pilates expert Alexa Idama worked on herself to rehabilitate her knee after injury and we learn how to support a client with a hamstring injury with Body Organics Education and Owner Carla Mullins.

We rethink how we work with pregnant and postnatal clients and get an insight into how mobility training could be the missing link in your Pilates teaching.

And in response to the [ABC News](#) story about the Rise of Reformer Injuries, we hear from a Senior Fitness Educator and Pilates Studio Owner and Instructor who explains why Group Reformer classes are good for the Pilates Industry as a whole.

Have a great month ahead!

**CJZarb**

FOUNDER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## CONTRIBUTORS

Alexa Idama, Carla Mullins, Ava Rodriguez, Anita Goswell, Kylie McGuiggan, Chantill Lopez, Anne Bishop, Alex Bohlinger and Faye Wood.

## CONTACTUS

### Editorial

Editor-in-Chief

Cie'Jai Zarb

[hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au](mailto:hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au)

### Photography

Alexa Idama, Body Organics Education, Ava Rodriguez, Anita Goswell, Kyle McGuiggan, Chantill Lopez and Anne Bishop, Faye Wood, Alexandra Bohlinger, Jorga Purdie and M.I.A. Studio, Sydney.

### Advertising

Cie'Jai Zarb

0412209460

[hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au](mailto:hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au)

### Questions/Feedback

If you would like to contribute or have any questions, please contact us at [hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au](mailto:hello@thepilatesjournal.com.au)

### On the Cover

Alexa Idama, Low Impact Fit



# Healing knee pain with Classical Pilates

FOR A MOVEMENT SPECIALIST, AN INJURY MIGHT FEEL LIKE A SETBACK BUT IT'S ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LEARNING AND GROWTH

by Alexa Idama

After a particularly intense hike in February, I returned home with a stiff feeling around my left knee that progressively got worse over the next few days. Simple things like walking and going up stairs became nearly impossible.

I could feel a bulge behind my left knee and immediately resorted to Dr. Google for a diagnosis of what might be going on. My search revealed that I had probably torn my meniscus or a ligament that was now floating around and causing the bulge in the back of my knee. My first instinct upon reading this diagnosis was to panic. I could not afford to go into surgery right now. I had too many commitments and plans for the next few months to be derailed by knee surgery.

Also how was it even possible that I had gotten injured during a hike? As a Pilates Teacher wasn't Pilates meant to have made my joints and body resistant to injury?

The truth is my personal practice had been suffering for the past few months. What was once a consistent daily practice that made me feel really strong had turned into a two to three times a week practice on good weeks. My workouts when they happened were always rushed and I would work through the classical sequences

without much focus on my individual needs, like I used to before.

Between training clients, trying to grow my business, attending trainings and taking care of my family, I was spending too much time sitting in front of my computer and in my car. My personal practice was really suffering and my body had lost a lot of its strength.

Once my mind calmed down I decided to take a more logical approach. While I had a bulge behind my knee, the joint itself did not feel particularly unstable. I was a Pilates Teacher after all and made a living helping people overcome joint pain, injury and weakness. How could I apply what I advised my clients to do, to myself.

The first step was to get an examination and X-ray done at the Orthopedist to determine what was really going on instead of relying solely on my Google diagnosis. This step is important. As Pilates practitioners and teachers we may know a lot about the body but we typically do not have x-ray vision or can see under the skin. When it comes to injuries it's best to collaborate with other professionals who can give us a more accurate diagnosis

***“Weak glutes are often a major cause of back, hip and knee pain. When you gain information about precisely what is not working...you (can) really focus on strengthening that specific area of weakness.”***



and make sure the exercise and strategy we are choosing for recovery will actually help to fix the problem and not make it worse.

It turned out what I was experiencing was hamstring tendinitis and not ligament or a meniscus tear. All those months of sitting in front of my computer were finally taking their toll in the form of weak quads, hamstrings and glutes all of which are needed for strong, healthy, functional, knees. An additional visit to the chiropractor also revealed that my hips were completely out of alignment. The recommendation was to strengthen the muscles that support my knee joint and stretch the areas that were tight. At least I would be able to fix the problem without needing surgery which was a big relief.

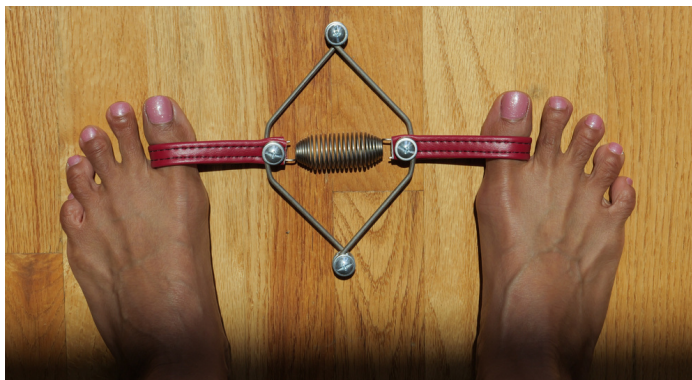
Luckily the Pilates system provides all the tools necessary to do exactly what was recommended. Strengthen and stretch the body in a way that brings back balance and functionality. It becomes possible to target muscles that remain dormant in other exercise formats and strengthen them to the point where they are functional again and support the body in its daily movements.

In Pilates, the feet also play a big part throughout the whole system. Dysfunction and weakness in the feet will often travel up the rest of the leg and manifest itself in places like the hip and joint. We find that on all the apparatus it's possible to incorporate some kind of footwork to strengthen the body from the ground or feet up.

With this in mind, I started with my feet and revisited the foot corrector and toe gizmo. Both are excellent tools for strengthening the muscles of the feet and ankles. To provide a solid foundation that supports the legs and torso. Apart from strengthening the feet using these foot-specific devices, it helps feel and build the connection between the feet and other parts of the body like your core and glutes. Using the toe gizmo to work the external rotation of my legs helped me realise just how weak my left glute was. Weak glutes are often a major cause of back, hip and knee pain. When you gain information about precisely what is not working it gives you the opportunity to really focus on strengthening that specific area of weakness.

Another favourite that I incorporated into my recovery journey pretty early on, is the Cadillac Breathing exercise. It's one of the best exercises for building the strength you need for healthy knees. Cadillac breathing strengthens weaknesses in the posterior chain while helping you find pelvic stability and creating length throughout the body. This exercise is especially useful when the client is not able or ready to push against the tension of the springs in Pilates. In the first few days of my injury when I could barely bend or move my knee this exercise brought immediate relief. It started the process of strengthening my hamstrings and glutes while simultaneously creating space in my tight hips.

The Wunda Chair is another great tool to incorporate when rehabilitating a knee injury. Especially in clients who have lost connection to their glutes and need to strengthen their quads and



hamstrings like I did. I started with light springs and basic exercises like seated footwork and standing pumping, often incorporating balls (like the Franklin balls) to help me maintain correct alignment in the work. Exercises like the single leg tendon stretch also helped greatly to bring back stability and connection throughout my injured leg.

Once I had gained some strength and it felt safe to do so, I incorporated going up front and mountain climbers on the wunda chair, really focusing on correct alignment in my feet and legs. Making sure my arches were not collapsing and my knees not leaning excessively inwards or outwards.

For releasing tightness in my hips and hamstrings, the Ladder barrel was my favourite tool. I made sure to work through the ballet/ladder barrel leg stretches daily. Exercise sequences like the tree on the barrel were fantastic for helping me open my tight hip flexors and quads while strengthening my core. I love that

even in the stretch sequences in Pilates you are always simultaneously working from an angle of strength. This means you are never passively stretching tight muscles but always lengthening them in a way that is functional to everyday activities off the Pilates apparatus.

Eventually I had gained enough strength and my knee felt good enough to get back into exercises like Leg Springs and Parakeet on the Cadillac. I also started incorporating the reformer again, keeping in mind I was using a classical reformer where the springs are evenly weighted. First on one to two springs before eventually building back up to three and four springs depending on the exercise over a period of about three months. In combination with outdoor walks and cycling on my spin bike, my knee actually feels better now than it did before.

Getting injured offers so many opportunities for learning. Once you are injured and a body part no longer functions you truly start to appreciate your body's ability to function as a whole. I learned so much about my body and what it needs in the process of rehabilitating this knee injury with Pilates. I also have so much more confidence when dealing with clients that have knee injuries. Going through this process was a great reminder of how much Pilates offers beyond a workout that will snatch your waist. This system is truly healing to the body when the work is tailored to the individual body and what it needs.

**Alexa is a classical Pilates teacher who aims to share her love for Pilates with as many people as possible, especially those who have traditionally been under-represented in this practice. Through classical Pilates she helps women reach new limits and discover the best version of themselves. Check out Alexa's in-person and virtual Pilates offerings at [lowimpactfit.com](http://lowimpactfit.com)**

**Reach your full potential.  
Advertise your business here.**

**[pilatesjournal.com](http://pilatesjournal.com)**





# Straining the friendship

HAMSTRING STRAIN EXERCISES FROM A PILATES PERSPECTIVE: TREATMENT AND EXERCISE TO PROMOTE OPTIMAL HEALING

by *Carla Mullins*

Our families are often our best teachers when it comes to working through injuries and rehabilitation issues. My partner Michael's most recent injury, providing me with an opportunity for growth, involved a grade 2 hamstring strain when surfing.

We're going to explore two different types of Hamstring injuries. Working with the weekend warrior with active overstretch hamstring injuries and some of the passive overstretch injuries or tendinopathies that are commonly seen in dancers and martial artists.

Whenever you deal with an injury whether it be a hamstring, shoulder or neck it is important to understand:

- a.) the individual muscles and joints and their functional role in whole-body movement.
- b.) your clients desired activities and how they are affected by a specific movement or joint pattern is essential for the development of a movement plan.

The challenging part after an injury is how to grade the load and manage tolerance for movement.

The hamstring group of muscles are part of the deep longitudinal sling, and therefore support the tibialis anterior muscles as part of dorsi flexion and the erector spinae muscles as part of thoracic extension.

Hamstrings are needed for hip extension and knee flexion in various stages of gait. Accordingly your exercise choices are those that support walking, running and spinal extension. How you grade your clients program depends on the mechanism of injury and stage of the healing process, their particular goals and condition before the injury. Mutually respectful work with a physiotherapist is also essential.

## Mechanism of hamstring injury

The mechanism for hamstring injuries are classified as trauma, active overstretch and passive overstretch. Each of these are more likely to affect one of the different hamstring muscle group.

A trauma muscle injury may be contact trauma, or surgery. It is not unusual to see cyclists and skiers who have had an avulsion fracture of the ischial tuberosity, resulting in the hamstring being torn. Once a hamstring has been damaged there is a vulnerability to future tears. Direct trauma can also happen as a result of surgeries, for example when an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is reconstructed and part of a hamstring tendon is removed to



recreate the ligament.

An active overstretch is also known as a 'deceleration' injury, because the hamstring is actively slowing the movement of the leg. For example when the hamstring muscle is working eccentricly, but is overcome by the stretching force applied to it and forcibly lengthened. Think what happens when you are running fast and you are about to have a foot strike, that is the stage when the biceps femoris muscle is vulnerable to this sort of injury. It is usually accompanied by the sudden onset of pain and an inability to continue the activity. This is the type of injury Michael experienced when surfing, during a turn.

A passive overstretch occurs when a stretch force is applied to the hamstring muscle with an injury occurring at the limit of range. Commonly seen amongst footballers kicking, or dancers, and generally involves the free tendon of semimembranosus and amongst dancers was also noted to involve quadratus femoris. Even if the force is applied slowly (as in a dancer stretching), there may be a pop associated with the injury. Symptoms may not develop for some hours, or only slowly over time, and may not be more than mild discomfort and dysfunction.

The location of the hamstring strain

The active overstretch or running injury tends to be at the musculo-tendinous junction of the quite lengthy intramuscular Biceps Femoris tendon and adjacent muscle. This type of injury will be close to a good recovery by around 12 weeks.

The closer the injury is to the buttock, think close to the ischial tuberosity, the more likely the injury is to involve a tendon tissue and the slower the rehabilitation. This is more likely to be coming from a passive overstretch injury and can have a much longer recovery program; often around 30-76 weeks. I have worked with a few ballerinas and barre officenados who have struggled with this recovery process.

Remember it is very important that your physiotherapist clear other options – especially when there was not an obvious ‘mechanism’ of injury.

#### The healing stages

Stage one: Destruction phase, at the time of injury the myofibers and ultra-small blood vessels are torn. You’ll see the start of bruising and an inflammatory cell reaction lasting for the first few days following injury.

Pain management is essential as it can inhibit movement, especially walking. This can mean that both stretching and sitting need to be avoided in the early days. As a damaged muscle will impact on the tendon it is important to manage tensile and compression loads.

Stage two: Repair phase, begins a few days after injury and peaks around two weeks post-injury. It allows regeneration of the myofibers, and simultaneous production of a type of collagen for early scar tissue. This is when your client should be doing some small movements at home, under the guidance of their physiotherapist. It is good to get a list of their exercises from this stage, because you will see how they inform your exercise progressions when the client comes back to the studio.



If there is a ‘passive stretch’ injury, the function loss for the person will be in flexibility, then active rather than passive stretching is ideal. Active exercises would be those designed to increase the range of motion (hip flexion with different extension angles at the knee). For this type of injury, it’s recommended to consider foam roller or trigger point work rather than stretching as the latter places both a tensile and compression load on the tendon.

When working with hamstring injuries it is important to remember that the muscle attaches to the pelvis and therefore will impact lumbo-pelvic control/ stability. This means you will need to add lumbo pelvic focus to your class through low load and low speed and NOT in the same plane in which the hamstring injury occurred. Progression of this work would focus on speed, intensity, and into the sagittal plane. Gentle pain-free eccentrically focussed exercises, what pilates is famous for, to accelerate recovery (this is not quicker healing, but functioning at a higher level with less pain). It’s important to note that whilst the client might be feeling quite good at this stage, healing is still in the early days and is vulnerable to further injury.

For example at this stage the client will be doing things like:

- Towel leg slides (we know this from our pre pilates work)
- Ball supported leg slides and side to side
- Standing towel leg extensions
- Wall slide/ mini squats ( with a quad focus)
- Some spinal mobility

*“When working with hamstring injuries it is important to remember that the muscle attaches to the pelvis and therefore will impact lumbo-pelvic control and stability.”*

You are not wanting to have load or resistance on the affected areas at this stage because the muscle fibres are not able to withstand forces, and could easily tear and prolong recovery.

Stage three: Remodelling phase, begins two to three weeks following injury and involves the production of scar tissue. Regenerated myofibers are maturing and scar tissue is re-organised and contracts, and the functional capacity of the muscle recovers.

The client should start walking without pain and add in some work on a stationary exercise bike, at around week three. At around week four and definitely by week six, your client will be coming back in a private or semi-private setting. It will probably be around week 12 when your client will be returning to sport, but I would still be taking it moderately carefully at this stage building up strength and endurance, particularly in your older clients, who in general will have slower healing times. With high-level athletes there is often a much faster return to sport, and they are managed by a team of health professionals.

Exercise choices in the first eight weeks include:

Starting at no resistance we progress to some very light resistance with mainly a quad focus at the start of any home program. This would include:

#### ·Wall squats

- Feet on a fit ball pressing the legs in and out, and towards the end of the eight weeks start with a modified shoulder bridge, foot on the ball
- Seated press outs (sit on the Reformer carriage with feet on the floor and no springs progressing to seated on a long box and feet on the foot bar with a light to medium spring setting)
- Seated on a Wunda chair at the end of a CoreAlign, feet slides progressing resistance.
- Standing leg work (wall lunges with a ball pressing into a hip for stability)
- Spinal rotation movements and
- Ankle range of motion movements for example using the Makalu.



Stage 4: Sports or activity specific.

At this stage, you would be progressing your client in a way reflective of their goals.

In the case of ‘active overstretch’ injury the exercise program is gradually progressed to high-level agility and sport-specific drills, high-level eccentric work, possibly including Nordic curls. The recovery program also progresses to include high-speed eccentric conditioning (sprinting or jump board work), as well as emphasising varying trunk movements during running or on the CoreAlign (for example upright posture, forward flexed, forward flexed and rotated).

For the ‘passive stretch’ injury, return to activity will be slow, with a high risk of recurrence. It is important for your client to understand that gradual pacing will improve their recovery and reduction of reinjury. With this type of injury, tendon rehabilitation is likely to be part of the plan. Continued graduated increase in both tensile and compressive forces is essential for hamstring recovery.

As with any musculoskeletal injury respect the healing process of the injury, work collaboratively with the physiotherapist and use the opportunity to build your relationship with your client and their goals. And finally relish the learning opportunity.

To learn more and see exercises and interesting progressions - the hamstring injury course can be found [here](#). Carla is the co-director and co-owner of Body Organics and Body Organics Education. Find out more [bodyorganicseducation.com/](http://bodyorganicseducation.com/)



# The Missing Link in Functional Training for Pilates Teachers

UNDERSTAND WHY JOINT MOBILITY EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR EVERY TEACHER TO HELP HARNESS YOUR CLIENTS POTENTIAL

by **Ava Rodriguez**

Joint mobility, the unsung hero of strength training, is not just your warm-up, cool-down, or typical Pilates flow—it's a game-changer. Joint mobility is all about identifying our joint limitations and addressing them systematically, following the sacred strength principles of time under tension and progressive overload.

Every single movement in the human body is about articulating one bone relative to another, when there is a lack of space then bone knocks into bone, a.k.a. sticky joints. Furthermore, where there is a lack of neurological control then tissue yields under load leading to an injury. Now, picture a laser beam and focus on one range in one joint at a time with the sole purpose of improving and increasing movement capacity. The main intent here is to train tissue to improve strength. The outcome is powerful and can result in increased movement capacity.

With Mobility gaining more and more popularity, it has become quite the buzzword. People are throwing it around like confetti and that's where the confusion happens.

I want to shed some light on the concept of joint mobility training and explain why it is essential for every teacher to acquire the necessary education to harness its transformative potential in their teaching.

As one of the few certified joint mobility specialists through the legendary Functional Range Systems here in Australia, I'm here to spill the beans.

Increasing joint capacity requires a different kind of input, far beyond what you see in conventional fitness and Pilates, or on your social media feed on the daily. And believe me, I've seen it all! As a clinically trained Pilates Teacher with a heavy focus on musculoskeletal conditions, I have earned my way to specialise in pre/post-rehabilitation training. I'm also qualified in manual therapy and have spent a whopping eight years studying anatomy outside of the realm of fitness.

But guess what? I still felt like something was missing—a crucial piece of the puzzle that would tie it all together.

In simpler terms, with joint mobility training, we're expanding space within our joints (sayonara, sticky icky joints!). We're strengthening the neglected ranges of motion and not just focusing on individual exercises. The goal is to train and increase tissue quality and resilience so that we can rock and roll both inside and outside the gym.

The work involved in joint mobility training is highly meticulous

and focuses on specific areas, which sets it apart from Pilates. While Pilates aims to promote overall body health by incorporating movements throughout the entire body, joint mobility training hones in on upgrading a specific range within a particular joint. As a result, joint mobility training not only enhances flexibility but also offers the added benefit of improved neurological control, leading to functional strength that is evident in improved balance, stability, and reflexes.

Now, let me paint you a picture. Imagine you're hustling from work to pick up your mischievous little rascals at school, and you need to swing by the grocery store before heading home. You're on fire, ninja-style, navigating through your neighbourhood like a boss. But suddenly, disaster strikes! You drop your keys, and they land with a resounding splat on the ground. Cue the eye rolls and sighs of frustration. Without a second thought, you dive down to pick up those keys because, let's face it, nobody's going to pause, set the groceries down, and perform a deadlift to retrieve them.

That's not how our incredible human bodies move, my friends. Do you see where I'm going with this? This is precisely why joint-specific training is crucial. We should concentrate on enhancing each range in our joints to expand their capacity. This way, we build a body for the long haul that doesn't feel limited because of ageing. Think of movement as a treasure chest waiting to be discovered and the key to success is to broaden your knowledge and embrace diversity.

The first thing all my clients unanimously mention is the newfound sense of freedom in their movement and the elimination of any pain or feelings of tightness. The second thing is how much more they are able to enjoy their specific sport or Pilates sessions. I have yet to come across any person who is not amazed by the impact that joint mobility has had on their life. Most people, especially Pilates teachers, believe that they already incorporate mobility into their sessions. However, when they discover the distinction between movement expressions and joint mobility training, it serves as a wake-up call!

If you're not incorporating joint mobility you are not doing enough for your joints. The stimulation required for our joints to exceed limitations and improve them is significantly different from conventional fitness and Pilates. Pilates enhances flexibility and strength across the entire range of an exercise. However, that is not synonymous with the end range of a joint. Furthermore, Pilates does not identify the specific range that needs to undergo construction.

The end goal is to add value and help people move better, allowing them to savour life's delightful moments to the fullest as well as looking good. So if integrating joint-specific training into your Pilates sessions sounds like this might be for you then read on. There is a distinction between information and knowledge: while information provides the theoretical facts, knowledge involves their practical application and this is the gap I'm aspiring to bridge.

**Ava is a clinical Pilates teacher, joint mobility specialist and manual therapist based in Neutral Bay Sydney, Australia. She travels the world presenting her unique education to like-minded individuals with a want to learn and grow. Ava's mobility certification teaches you how to sprinkle joint-mobility work into a pilates class. You can find out more [here](#) and sample a free joint-specific hip-focused class [here](#) too.**



Before training



After training

# Fitness Reformer Classes are good for the Pilates Industry

## EDITORIAL

by Anita Delbridge Goswell

With 35 years of experience as an educator, instructor and business owner, Anita Delbridge Goswell shares her response to the recent [news reports](#) of a rise in Pilates injuries and calls for greater regulation for the industry.

It's an exciting time to be an instructor in the Pilates industry. According to AusPlay, Pilates is the fifth most popular non-sport physical activity for adults. Between 2021 and 2022 the number of Australians participating in Pilates classes increased by over 145,000. This information suggests that not only is the popularity of Pilates exponentially increasing, but it is here to stay. Which is reassuring, considering how threatened our industry was during the Covid lockdowns.

In my opinion, the rise in participation is due to the increase in fitness Reformer Pilates facilities in conjunction with the inclusion of Pilates as a membership category with AUSactive.

Prior to the growth of Fitness Reformer facilities in Australia, we had two small professional registers representing the Pilates industry. The introduction and increase of Fitness Reformer facilities benefitted our industry by increasing consumer awareness that Pilates exists and can be affordable. Keeping in mind that these classes are for healthy populations. My studio has never been busier, and in my opinion, is largely to do with Pilates gaining exposure with the fitness Reformer facilities.

My studio is a traditional Pilates studio, with an emphasis on injury rehabilitation. I regularly take on new clients who have tried Fitness Reformer Pilates and love it. They either want to enhance their Pilates experience in a traditional studio or they have been referred to me by staff at a fitness Reformer facility for a personalised program for injury rehabilitation. They refer on as they are aware that their target audience is healthy populations.

The introduction of Pilates memberships within AUSactive has also been beneficial in ensuring the longevity of Pilates in Australia. During the Covid lockdowns Pilates was deemed to be part of the Fitness Industry and not an essential service by the Government. Emerging out of lockdown and realising how important exercise was for people's mental, social and physical health, AUSactive is making it part of their role to see that exercise and the services of exercise professionals are seen as an essential service by the government. With over 18,000 members in AUSactive, it now has extended memberships to include Pilates and Yoga professionals. These benefits I believe include being part of a



much broader association of fitness professionals and one that focuses on standards and education as an essential part of the organisation.

### Short Reformer Courses vs Certificate IV in Reformer

Now to the news reports of a rise in Pilates injuries and calls for greater regulation.

The ABC news article made a few critical observations: 'People can do a weekend course and become an instructor, and that's really concerning' and 'Anyone with a Certificate III in fitness can come in and teach'.

The criteria for an instructor to undertake a short course in Reformer Pilates is a minimum of a Certificate III in Fitness, yes. I have taught the Certificate III and IV in Fitness and Certificate IV, Diploma and Reformer short courses in Pilates.

The course content in the Certificate (Cert) III in Fitness covers anatomy and physiology, training principles and programming. Therefore, a weekend course in Reformer Pilates, for Cert III qualified fitness instructors is no different to the weekend courses approved by the Pilates Alliance Australasia (PAA) for fitness instructors and allied health professionals. In my opinion, I have found that Cert III and IV Fitness instructors who do Pilates short courses, understand and implement training principles and programming better than many allied health professionals. This is because fitness instructors have learnt how to design and instruct

*“...there is a place for all kinds of Pilates. Not one modality is better than the other, it depends on the needs of the individual using the services.”*



various exercise programs, commonly, excluding exercise physiologists, allied health professionals' main role isn't focused on exercise prescription. In my opinion, the concepts of program design are not covered in the same depth in comprehensive Pilates courses as it is in the Cert III and IV in Fitness.

### Injuries

'Pilates injuries are on the rise...' read the ABC news headline. This article refers to the PAA having two reports of people injuring themselves at Reformer Pilates classes. Approximately 584,500 or 2.9% of the Australian population 15 years and over participate in Pilates (AusPlay 2023). I am curious as to the number of injuries sustained in traditional Pilates Studios. I certainly can name more than two from Pilates studios that are operated by diploma-qualified instructors in my area.

### How we can help

A lot of fitness Reformer instructors are not aware that there are other comprehensive Pilates training courses available. I believe the associations have an important role to play in promoting these courses and with a coordinated approach with AUSActive we could reach more people.

In my opinion, there is a place for all kinds of Pilates. We have fitness Reformer Pilates for healthy populations, traditional studio Pilates for individualised programs, especially injury rehabilitation. We also need allied health professionals to diagnose conditions and who specialise in exercise prescription for chronic health conditions. Not one modality is better than the other, it depends on the needs of the individual using the services.

What articles like this raise for us is the need to develop a united direction for all participants in the industry. Not only would it be more beneficial but more productive and potentially lucrative for the Pilates industry. It is all our responsibility to embrace change and use our knowledge and experience to continue to educate and grow the Pilates community.

### The ABC article ends on a positive note

The article ends with the story of a 72 year old woman who does Pilates at her gym four times a week. She quotes, 'I thought I was pretty fit....but this has taken me to a whole new level....I hope it's not a fad....I feel fitter and stronger, my balance is also better' (ABC News)

Pilates has been in Australia since the 1980s, however, this woman only tried it because her gym offered it. This explosion of fitness Pilates classes offered in the gym setting is reaching far more of the Australian population than traditional studios have ever achieved.

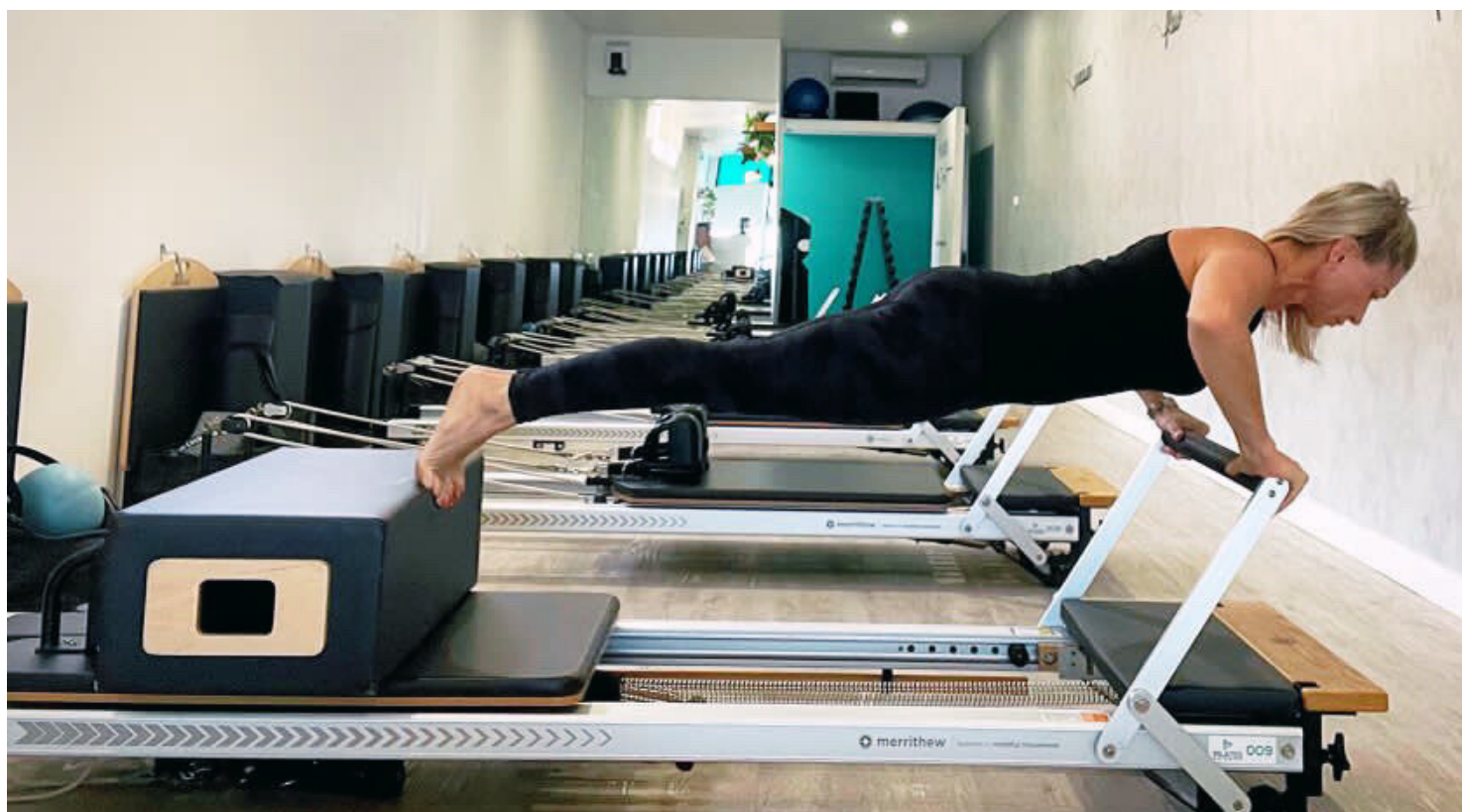
Working with these changes in the industry as opposed to against them, can only help to give the Pilates Method the exposure and longevity it deserves.

**Anita Delbridge Goswell has been in the fitness industry for 35 years. She is a Pilates instructor and owner of [Lifestyle Pilates & Rehabilitation Studio](#) for over 23 years. She is also an Exercise Physiologist, and is on the AUSActive Health & Fitness Industry Standards Council and the ESSA Educational Review Committee.**

# Progressing your Push up on the Reformer

EXPERT PILATES INSTRUCTOR KYLIE MCGUIGGAN SHOWS HOW YOU CAN WORK TOWARDS PROGRESSIVE PUSH UPS ON THE REFORMER

*by Kylie McGuiggan*



Progressing to a full push-up takes time, dedication and practice. So naturally it's not for the faint-hearted. Nor is it for every client. Maybe it's something you want to work on for your self-practice.

In this article, we go through the various progressions of a push-up so you understand where you can take your practice as a Pilates professional.

To be able to complete a full push-up, on your toes, you will need a strong core, back, chest, arms and shoulders and leg strength as push-ups are a full body integrated movement, meaning several of your muscles are working together at once.

If you cannot complete a push-up on the toes then you may want to start with strength-building exercises like maintaining a plank. Start on the knees if needed and then build to the toes. Progress the time held in the plank until you feel you can layer in 'progressions' like alternate shoulder taps or a single-leg plank. Increase the time held in these progressive moves and once you can complete these different variations with good form and technique, it's time to start to attempt a push-up on the Reformer.

Again, start your push-up by stacking on the knees first and then build to the toes. Progressing the number of repetitions you can complete your push-ups in each variation.

If you find this increasingly difficult, there's always a regression you can start with. Things like building your arm strength with bicep and or tricep exercises or building your back strength first if required before starting your Plank.

Start on a light spring.

Before we begin, make sure you know your limitations before starting. I would suggest starting off with a medium spring first and then progressing to a lighter one over time. Using a medium and light spring will give more support to your core and back if this is your first time completing a push-up - so it makes for a safer option for keeping the carriage fairly still. That being said it will also be stronger on the shoulders/ arms so have this in mind and know your limitations. I recommend 'at least' starting off with a medium spring to start with and see what works best for you from here.



The lighter the spring the harder your work will be on maintaining trunk and core stability for your move so this will be your goal to progress.

1- Start on the knees with feet/ legs up against the short box and arms out wide on the footbar. Essentially you are in a kneeling plank position so trunk in a diagonal position. Commence your push and then pull the knees in towards the footbar, (or think knee tuck) and press the knees back out so you are back in your kneeling plank set-up position and go again.

2- Both feet against the short box and commence the push-up again by pulling the chest towards the footbar and then pushing the chest away, keeping the whole body strong and spine neutral. Pull the knees in and out and go again.

3- Staggered leg - one foot is on the high edge of the short box and one foot is low on the bed (carriage) against the short box-again complete your push-up by pulling your chest towards the footbar and pushing away again. Keeping stillness through your trunk and carriage **WHILST** maintaining neutral placement of your hips so your hips stay nice and square through the movement. Pull the knees in towards the footbar and then press the legs away and complete the movement again.

4- Repeat other side. Make sure you even up!

5- Both feet/ toes are now against the high edge of the short box-complete for your full-range push-up by pulling arms out wide and chest to the footbar. This is starting to get quite a bit harder now so watching your range is crucial and sometimes even changing the spring load up by just a quarter will benefit your core and back. Watch the hips do not sink or the low back collapse. Bend both knees in and go again.

6- Now, it's time for the grand finale move. One foot against the high edge of the short box and the other leg in a static leg raise hold. Complete your push up- pull the single leg on the box in and out and whilst keeping your leg raised and extending back through the hip and level. Lower your leg raise down to the box and then repeat the other side.

Important things to keep in mind:

In all steps of a progression your hands remain on the footbar. You could try the platform extender so you are in a decline position, however this set-up would be much harder.

- Shoulders must be positioned over hands throughout all the moves.
- Maintain a long, stacked and neutral spine throughout.
- Always activate and engage your core/ lifting your pelvic floor — **BEFORE** you commence your push-up.
- Breath is crucial to help you move. Breathe in to lower and breathe out to push-up.
- Elbows wide, strong shoulders and strong legs - everything is working here.

Always check in on these considerations with each move and if you slump through the shoulders or lower back then maybe take it back to the previous step and go again.

And remember progress is progress. We've all got to start somewhere!

**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](#).**





# Making your online business thrive

BUILDING AN ONLINE BUSINESS THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH PASSIVE INCOME, SUBSCRIPTION MODELS, OR BUILDING A MASSIVE VIDEO LIBRARY

***Chantill Lopez + Anne Bishop***  
***Co-creators of the Embodied Business Institute***

You're ready (maybe yearning) to crack the code on hybridising your amazing teaching practice so you can make more impact on more people WHILE making more money. Oh, and do it without crushing your soul, sucking your time, or breaking the bank — that, of course, is non-negotiable. However, it's too often what happens. But we're about to change all that nonsense!

If you raise your hand to any of the following, we see you:

You're a movement teacher and...

...you're a creator.

...Pilates is one of your tools, but you have lots of tools in your arsenal.

...you know that what you do could change so many more people than you would ever be able to see in your studio.

...you have a body of work inside of you because you've been changing people's lives and bodies.

...you've already taken the first hard steps toward putting your work online in some capacity and likely with some success.

BUT...it's not quite working out the way you had thought or hoped it would. Your students aren't logging onto your online videos consistently. Or they don't get the same results with our online education as when they work with you in-studio. Or even though you now have an online component to your business everyone still only wants to work with you in-person or on zoom, and you're still as busy as ever.

## Teaching the 'whole person'

In Pilates we don't just teach the body in front of us; we teach the whole person in front of us. When we neglect teaching to the whole person — whether because we're not sure how or we've lost sight of how — our students suffer and our career can stagnate. One of the primary challenges we face is taking our powerful in-person work into the online space without believing that it won't translate. The truth is designing whole-person driven offers and curriculum is, in fact, more conducive to the online space in many ways if we just learn a few critical skills.

## The reality of taking your work online

To unravel this puzzle, let's first look at some of the most common challenges educators face when taking their work online.

The Desire: Create 'passive income' by putting DIY content in the online space via a video library

- The Challenge: Video libraries don't transform people. Video libraries are the same as YOUTUBE and that's free
- The Reality: There's no such thing as passive income because it takes a lot of time, money, and effort as well as a team to build the platform, systems, and marketing to make this model work. (Welcome to the high-volume model.)

The Desire: Serve more people and make your work more accessible i.e. affordable via a subscription-based offer

- The Challenge: It takes lots and lots of time and energy to create new recurring content that makes you feel good about the offer and satisfies your students
- The Reality: Building a subscription model not only requires you to constantly be creating content, it also demands that you SELL A LOT of subscriptions to make it worth your while (high-volume model). And it typically attracts students/customers that are unwilling or unable to convert into future investments

The Desire: Create something bigger with all of your knowledge: a specialised teacher training or mentorship; an entirely new method; write a book and launch a supporting online training.

- The Challenge: You're not sure where to start and holding the vision for something so big is both exhilarating and exhausting
  - Or... you get a great running start and launch your work, but you're afraid to charge enough so enrolment still has to be high to make a profit and for you to be motivated to keep building
- The Reality: Most teachers give up before they even get a formula in place that works and they can repeat and scale. The bottom line with all high-volume models is that they take a lot of work and a lot of resources before you see the payoff.

## Building for Transformation

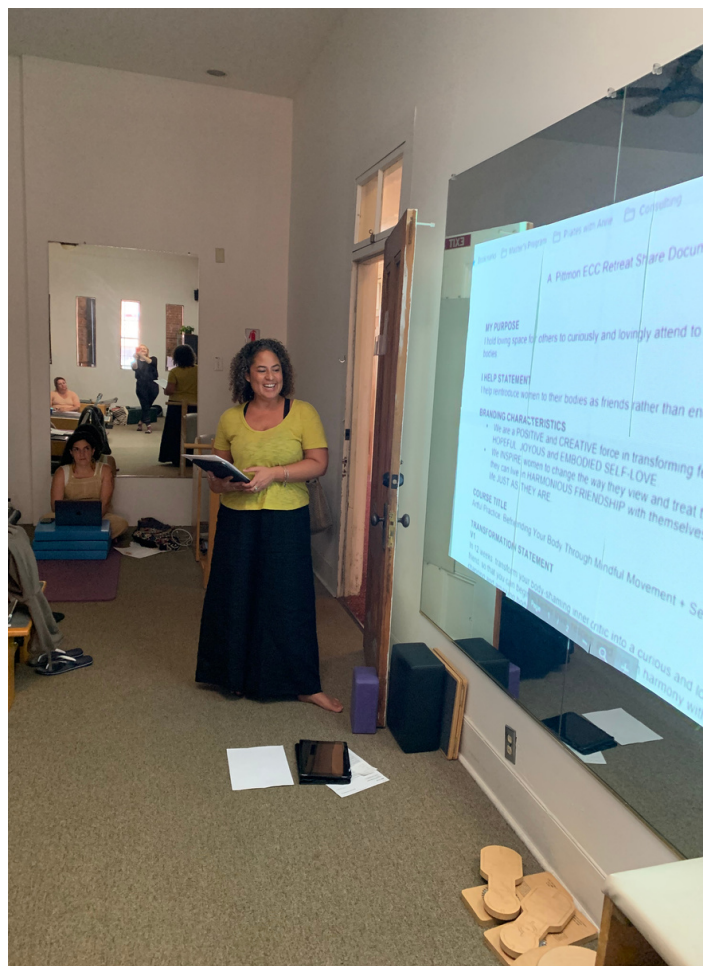
Designing low-volume, high-value offers that transform not only allows you to leverage your expertise and reach more people, it increases your ability to transition your students into the next offer — because they want to continue to be transformed...by you — keeping them in your sphere longer. This decreases your work while increasing your revenue over time and it's the key to a hybrid ecosystem that can sustain and fulfill you.

Here's how:

Creating for transformation means using powerful curriculum design that can be applied to the online or in-person space, can take shape as a workshop, multi-week course, retreat or training and is scalable over time without losing the meaning or lowering the integrity of what you do.

For our clients who come to us having already created or perhaps launched an online offer, but are struggling to get traction, here are the top three strategies we focus on:

**#1 WHAT IS THE TRANSFORMATION?** Identifying, clarifying, and designing from a powerful transformation.



*“...the answer is **NOT** more (content) and the answer is **NOT** free (content).”*

*When you lean into your transformation statement you only offer educational resources that support your students to achieve the goal.”*

Each offer or program must have a clear and potent transformation that can be achieved through a strategic formula. The formula is a process of curriculum design that's based on how the brain learns and how long-term behaviour change happens from a nervous system perspective.

A transformation statement will not only guide your students in the process and make selling your program easier, it also helps you edit down superfluous information or content that will overwhelm your students in the online space.

Here's an example: Within the 10-week Pilates Pelvic Power Program (PPPP) you will stop worrying and cross your legs when you sneeze and be thrilled to freely laugh until you cry and even jump on a trampoline again.

This transformation statement normalises the challenge of pelvic floor strength and flexibility loss while clearly defining activities lost through weakness and gained through the program.

The transformation statement speaks to the mindset of worry and freedom while also speaking to actual physical activities.

Transformation statements support engagement in your online programs. It serves as the WHY of your program when your students' motivation dips, they anchor into WHY they are logging on even if they are not feeling like it right at the moment.

#### **Engagement Pro-Tip:**

Have your students share their own transformation statements for why they joined your course and you'll get even more students logging on. Why? Because adult learners are motivated by being able to see themselves — and their desire for transformation — within the one you've written for your program.



**#2 HOW DO I TAKE THEM ON A JOURNEY THAT MAKES THEM WANT TO KEEP COMING BACK?** Designing offers built on neuroscience, motivation and engagement science, and nervous system behaviour change.

LESS is MORE online. Because many of us wrongly believe that online teaching and learning is less valuable than in-person learning we tend to overcompensate by adding too much content. This hinders the learner because their brains become overwhelmed and their motivation wanes, they stop engaging and oftentimes feel embarrassed that they're not keeping up.

#### **Engagement Pro-Tip #1:**

And non-negotiable) Edit down your course deliverables by at least 30 per cent the first time you offer your course. Your students will have a higher likelihood of feeling — and being — successful, which increases motivation and engagement — rather than tapping out because there's just too much to do, read, and sort through.

#### **Engagement Pro-Tip #12**

You can always add a dig deeper section, which is bonus material that they can CHOOSE to engage with. Learner choice is important so your students' fulfillment (fuel for motivation and engagement), and this way they won't be overwhelmed just getting through the basics of the course. \*Overdelivering will also stop them from signing up for more. Why would they want more when they haven't been able to get through what they already have? It's bad for conversion.

Most of us teach adult learners with busy lives. We live in a world

with a fire hose of content streaming at us every day. Every day over 700,000 hours of video are uploaded to Youtube and as of May 2023 Pilates Anytime has 89.6K thousand subscribers and Pilatesology has 55.6K thousand subscribers.

So the answer is NOT more and the answer is NOT free.

When you lean into your transformation statement you only offer educational resources that support your students to achieve the goal. And once they've achieved it, or at least seen measurable results, they will want to keep working with you to have more of that same inspiring experience.

**#3 HOW DO I CREATE A CONTAINER OF SAFETY AND TRUST?**  
Identifying exactly what and how to create enough safety and trust that your students are able to truly experience behaviour change and optimise their learning.

Within the online environment, people can feel unsafe just like in the studio for reasons we expect and some we've never even thought of.

Although many of the same components can play out in online learning, we also need to design for: fear of technology; the need for personal connection to optimise learning and regulate the nervous system; variance in the learner; accessibility for all abilities; establishing clear expectations, goals, deadlines and procedures.

We want to design online teaching and learning that makes people safe so that they can be transformed.

Lack of safety commonly manifests as lack of motivation. Designing for what students can do if (and when) they lose motivation shouldn't be addressed by adding more or newer content or flashy choreography, which actually diminishes safety. The reason people don't continue is deeper than that.

The brain and nervous system are at the heart of feeling safe and we can design for that, too! Through nervous system-based strategies, creating intentional and supportive community learning, varying learning strategies and materials, and giving learners choice our containers, whatever they are, promote safety, trust and...you got it: transformation!

To keep your students logging back into your online studio you want to design it so that they feel warm, squishy and safe in that online container that they desire to log back on. To do this, become a student of your students and think about what circumstances allow your students to feel safe.

#### **Engagement Pro-Tip:**

Most people feel safe when they can establish a connection, or even bond, with others. Providing opportunities for your students to connect with each other in your online studio will increase their sense of safety and lift up their intrinsic motivation.

Taken together, these three strategies allow us to step into hybridisation with clarity, ease and energy. This is how we pave the way for diversifying our work so that it is packed with meaning and generates the money we desire, while avoiding the struggle of the high-volume model that will more easily drain us than sustain us.



It's time to step into greater leadership within the online space and move beyond creating copious amounts of new exercise videos. We'll leave that to what happens on Youtube.

**Chantill and Anne first crossed paths in 2002, each in the midst of building their Pilates businesses in neighbouring cities. Nearly ten years later they reconnected and began collaborating on their first continuing education and business development projects. In 2016 they launched the first iteration of their shared business, now known as the Embodied Business Institute. Their mission is to support teachers in the Pilates and movement industries to make money and meaning from expertise.**

**If you'd like to get more of a taste for how to design for transformation both in-person and online, click here to get a free 6-Step Design Guide to Skyrocket Your Engagement, Conversion + Course Profitability [HERE](#).**

**If you're ready to jump in and want to discuss next steps with Chantill and Anne, [book a free Clarity Call NOW](#).**

# The power of Pilates and Prenatal care

PREGNANCY IS NOT A CONDITION BUT A SUPERPOWER. RETHINKING HOW WE WORK WITH PREGNANT AND POSTNATAL BODIES

*by Faye Wood*

Let's rewind back to when you first started teaching. I'm sure that sometime within your first three months of teaching Pilates at least one person came to you for a diagnosis and assistance with an obscure ailment that, as a rookie, you had no idea how to manage. This person shared their concerns with you because through our work we're given the unique position of gaining people's trust early on. We make them feel good. We know what we're talking about and it's making them feel better. As such we are in a seat of influence.

In my experience Pregnant clients are no different, in fact, they are at one of the most vulnerable and transformative moments of their life. Naturally, this brings with it a flurry of emotions as a result of hormonal changes but also just the realisation that their reality is shifting. Some women cling to their previous selves, trying to fit in with the regular class and squeezing their bump into their leggings. Others go out and buy a whole new wardrobe and enrol in prenatal classes, one day after a missed period. This insight informs us of a woman's journey to this point; which in turn indicates how she will travel through it. You, as a Pilates instructor, have the capacity to alter her course, be it consciously or not.

In 2016 I opened Umoya Pilates Studio, in the Inner West of Sydney, Australia. Umoya is an isiZulu word that encapsulates breath, wind and spirit. This word not only pays homage to my South African roots but also captures the way Pilates makes me feel - a suspension of time, a transcendence. After years of freelance teaching it felt amazing to be in the space I created. Everything was going great, until two of my loyal clients fell pregnant! What a disruption to my flow! At previous studios, I would simply modify the exercises and not be too concerned about them. I knew I had sound prenatal Pilates training but out of fear of injury to my clients or to my business, I signed up for every Prenatal exercise course I could. Thankfully the cross-section of information is pretty similar and I felt I had enough to see them safely through their pregnancies and postnatal period. It was a wonderful learning experience for me too.

Not long after, I found myself pregnant. To me my pregnancy felt like a fabulous experiment. I loved to prod and poke my belly and explore movement and sensations. It was through pregnancy I



discovered my belief that, with practice and purpose my body can do anything I ask it to do. Despite this, I was struck by how lacking the rules around moving a pregnant body are. The Prenatal classes I would attend weren't hitting the spot, either too easy or just uncomfortable. Some days I would feel like a lioness with endless power and strength and other days I'd be a butterfly. I ended up doing a lot of my own practice, which was a cacophony of dance, pilates, yoga and primal movements. Moving made me feel at home in my body again. In theory the education we receive in our training as prenatal Pilates instructors is correct although not nuanced; and to me; something was missing.

It was after the birth of my son that my education into Matrescence really kicked off. Matrescence, a word recently popularised by Psychologist Aurelie Athen, was originally coined by Anthropologist Dana Raphael, who also brought the word Doula to the vernacular. Matrescence as defined by Raphael is '...the process of becoming a mother – a developmental passage where a woman transitions, through pre-conception, pregnancy and birth, surrogacy, or adoption to the postnatal period and beyond'.

I was trying to make sense of the fourth trimester and this new human that was created at birth, not only my son; but me! It was during my postpartum recovery that I started to hit on the missing link in prenatal Pilates training.

Pregnant women are bombarded with contradictory messages about their bodies. They are encouraged to stay fit while being cautioned not to raise their heart rates. Rest is advised, even if they're not tired, but lying on their backs is discouraged. They should enjoy their pregnancy but work, socialise, dress and behave as though they are not pregnant.



The biggest challenge facing pregnant women is that they want the best for their baby, but the message they receive is that they themselves are the biggest risk to their babies wellbeing.

You can break it down to semantics. We use phrases like 'symptoms of pregnancy' - which in itself has negative connotations: symptoms being associated with ill health or disease.

In my view, pregnancy is not a condition to be treated - it is a woman's body and mind levelling up!

Pregnancy is a natural state of being. It is a prerequisite for a woman to be of reasonable health to become and maintain a pregnancy. Yet when she does, we label her with this 'condition' that requires treatment and monitoring, instead of celebrating and exalting her passage into a new phase of her life. This notion that pregnancy is a limitation is deeply embedded in the social culture of Women's health and within the medical system - a notion that many are calling "Herstory" as opposed to history. It is evident in the lack of resources and knowledge about women's bodies which is only now being brought into the light. It's for this reason I shun the words 'pregnancy symptoms' and instead call them 'enhancements'. A common enhancement hormone that can affect a woman while pregnant and postpartum with regard to Pilates is Relaxin. We know it is there to create more suppleness in the joints, so that the pelvis can widen to carry and birth the baby. Tick. It also has an important effect on the smooth muscles which ensures that the uterus doesn't contract and expel the foetus until its due date. Does it also create reflux and joint pain? It does. There are a plethora of other essential hormones that are required for a pregnancy to progress and come with their own secondary responses.

It's also important to acknowledge the messages women receive about their body during pregnancy, a lot of it sounds like "You're not enough without this monitoring. You can't do this on your own without the help of a medical professional. Your body cannot be trusted as you have these symptoms. Your body is dangerous and

and inhospitable." Imagine hearing these words before you step on a stage to deliver a speech, or before surgery.

As we sit in our power as Pilates Instructors it is our duty to make women feel empowered, proud and confident in their body.

It occurred to me as I did more research into Postnatal Recovery and Pilates through Carolyn Anthony's The Centre For Women's Fitness, and coaching with Amy Taylor Kabbaz and many others in between; that it is the very same messages many women are healing from years after having their babies. The inadequacy, the doubt; the rates of Postnatal Depression which rose during COVID from 1 in 6 to 1 in 3; are actually a symptom of the messaging women received in Pregnancy as well as Postpartum.

"Pilates is complete coordination of body, mind and spirit."- Joseph Pilates.

Pilates principles are founded in the mind body connection. Somehow when a woman becomes pregnant, a segregation of the mind, body and spirit occurs. The delicious trinity of Pilates falls away. MRI research conducted in 2019 shows that the maternal brain undergoes structural changes comparable to those observed in adolescent brains. In a process called pruning, pregnant women lose some grey matter of the brain which accounts for the very real existence of 'the Mummy- brain'. However, just like a rose, we prune off what is no longer needed so that new buds can grow. The brain is optimising to care for her offspring and to step into her new role. So instead of holding a woman ransom to her forgetfulness, let us educate women to embrace their brain's plasticity and imprint positivity, strength, and competency in their bodies. Why not imprint positivity, strength and competency in her body, so that when her world is turned upside-down with the arrival of her baby, deep inside her psyche she knows she is everything she needs to be a wonderful mother.

A term that Muriel Morwitzer first introduced to me through Anatomy Trains, Art of Motion Myofascial Slings program is



***“In my view, pregnancy is not a condition to be treated – it is a woman’s body and mind levelling up!”***

***“As we sit in our power as Pilates Instructors it is our duty to make women feel empowered, proud and confident in their body.”***

Somatic Trust. Somatic: relating to or affecting the body as it is separate from the mind and Trust: a firm belief in the reliability of a person or thing. During the time I was doing this course, moving through the world as a new mother, I was blown away by what a gift it is to possess Somatic Trust and what a blessing it is to share with other women through the art of Pilates and movement.

My interest was piqued enough to go even deeper after I had my second baby and a blighted ovum in between\*\*. I studied through Rachel Reed to become a Childbirth Educator. This exploration led me to create the Amandla Mama Workshops, bridging the realms of movement, meditation, birth education, and Matrescence.

Amandla is a South African call to arms; a rallying cry that means power, competence, and strength. It was ideal to me as it captures the notion of Childbirth as an act of Feminism.

So many movements we teach in Pilates cross over into the birth space, and it felt natural to me to combine the worlds together. It brings back the Pilates trinity of body, mind and spirit.

Through my work in the Amandla Mama Workshops and my Prenatal Pilates classes, I now educate, facilitate, celebrate and inspire pregnant women to move through their birth and subsequently into motherhood embodying their power. By no means does every Prenatal Pilates instructor need to go out and become a Childbirth Educator or a Doula, but it is our duty to educate our clients about their bodies and their magic. I feel lucky to have the work of the Midwives, Doulas and Mothers before me who shared their wisdom for me to find a calling in this field.

\*\* I chose the words blighted ovum as opposed to miscarriage, as I didn't 'miss-carry' anything. It was an anomaly as it appears frequently in nature; words matter.

I think it important to acknowledge the fear Pilates instructors feel around the subject of Pregnant and Postpartum bodies and the gaps in the education process for instructors. While the education isn't deficient per se, if you've been pregnant or had babies you'll be nodding along when I say it's just not adept. It's humbling and liberating to find your niche, so don't be afraid to refer your clients on to someone who may be better to serve this specific community. Many mothers never forget what the experience was like for them making them great teachers who can guide them with a more nuanced hand.

I wanted to leave you with this thought. Remember your influence. The messages you send out to your clients carries with it power, and significance. You play an important part of a woman's story if she is entrusting you with her body at this time. Let us reshape our perspectives, break stigmas, and redefine pregnancy and motherhood as empowering and transformative experiences. By recognising our influence and using it to support women, we can guide them towards confidence and capability, allowing them to embody the goddesses they truly are.

**Faye is the creator and instructor at Umoya Studio; as well as the facilitator of the Amandla Mama Workshops. Join her on 4 August for an industry webinar covering the purpose of Pre and Postnatal hormones; their affects on our clients and how we can better serve our Prenatal + Postpartum Clients in the Studio, head to the website for details : [www.umoyastudio.com](http://www.umoyastudio.com) or [@studioumoya](https://www.instagram.com/studioumoya) / [@amandlamama](https://www.instagram.com/amandlamama)**



# Treating the whole body

HOW OFTEN DO YOU LOOK AT THE BODY HOLISTICALLY? ALEXANDRA BOHLINGER EXPLAINS HER APPROACH AND WHY TREATING THE WHOLE BODY IS ESSENTIAL

by *Cie'Jai Zarb*



The Pilates Journal speaks with British Osteopath and Classical Pilates teacher Alexandra Bohlinger. Aly is a second-generation master teacher from Joseph Pilates and will be presenting a number of topics at the upcoming PAA Conference in August.

There's something unique about Alexandra Bohlinger's knowledge and approach to teaching. It's clear from speaking with Aly that her knowledge and care for a client's body or anybody's body really is at another level. Her clients have described her as having magic hands and for many it has brought them to a transformational point in their lives.

With a background in martial arts and dance, Aly was hungry to understand the body on a deeper level, hence her studying Sports Science and soon after Osteopathy. Having a guiding teacher at the helm like Pilates elder, Romana Kryzanowska, also shaped a lot of Aly's approach to teaching Pilates. "Romana was a wonderful role model. Always such a passionate mover. She was

always dancing in the studio. Clients would come in with shoulder injuries, hip and back injuries and she would always treat the whole body. She would avoid the area that was in pain and that area would get stronger by moving the whole body. She taught me to focus on the body in front of me and save part of the end of the session to strengthen the injured area, but to move the person and make them feel good about themselves," she explained.

It's something that now comes so naturally to Aly. "I also discovered that much like Joseph Pilates I also start working with my clients by first sitting and listening to them before using manual therapy. Joe used to sit on the Cadillac or on the table and talk to his clients first. I always sit with them and then use my hands to rehab them before I get them moving in the Pilates studio," said Aly.

"Another great role model for me was the founding father of Osteopathy, Andrew Taylor Still M.D. who believed the body has the ability to heal itself. These two great role models made me understand that the body has a great capacity to heal and it's my

role as an osteopath (osteo) to encourage that process – the body will do the rest.

“I’m not just interested in the injury, it’s how you got the injury in the first place and how well your body moves overall. Sometimes I use my psychologist hat or my doctor’s hat in order to identify what the body is telling me,” said Aly.

As part of Aly’s presentation at the PAA conference, she’ll be covering the latest research on how to work with clients with Hypermobility.

“Most people don’t know that they are hypermobile. Every time I diagnose a client to be hypermobile they often tell me they thought that was normal. I believe knowledge is power so when we give them this information, we empower them to manage it,” said Aly.

“I can see a hypermobile person a mile away. As teachers, we need to be careful as often those who are hypermobile can cheat through the things you teach them. You might look at a person and think they are doing it really well but they are probably not feeling what they are doing.

“The ranges of motion are so big, for example in the Roll Up they can do it but they aren’t feeling it in the right muscles where they should be feeling it. You need to look for signs like they aren’t sweating as much as they could. If they don’t find the deeper work it can lead to multiple injuries. So the question becomes are you hurting or hindering them? Leading Pilates expert, Jay Grimes always used to say all injuries are, is wrong repetitive movement.

“In my sessions with clients, I don’t like to use the word pain, I use the word symptom – for example how is your symptom today? Pain triggers a negative connotation. We need to remember that pain can be a good thing, it can show you that you need to do something in a better way. It can be a protection mechanism like when we stop before touching a fire. It’s an alarm system for you to stop. On the other hand, chronic pain is not so fun. And requires curiosity to get to the bottom of it.

“There’s such a large spectrum when it comes to hypermobility and it comes with lots of other pathologies. It can affect the heart,

***“Often those who are hypermobile can cheat through the things you teach them...they aren’t feeling it in the right muscles ... it can lead to multiple injuries. So the question becomes are you hurting or hindering them?”***

the lungs, blood pressure, heart rate, all sorts of things. It affects multiple joints, and it affects systemically, having an impact inside the body’s digestive system and also impacting things on the outside of your body. It’s a connective tissue disorder that affects the whole body.

“In the old way of thinking we’d say your joints are flexible or loosey-goosey and the more we dig we find that many have minor injuries. They are less proprioceptive than most people. They don’t know where their joints are in space. The body isn’t as grounded – they don’t have as much feedback as other people. It’s hard for them to fire the areas they need to fire.

“Lots of them have minor injuries like a meniscus tear, knee or hip issue, shoulder subluxation, Sacroiliac joint dysfunction, lower back pain or weaknesses in muscles – because it’s the collagen and cartilage that are different. We now also have enough



research to link to fatigue and depression, ADHD, dyslexia and autism” - Aly will be sharing and explaining these links more at the conference.

“You can definitely restore people to the strongest version of themselves. The more put-together, reliable and autonomous version of themselves. You want them to feel it in the core, the glutes, the back muscles, unfortunately, they are feeling it in other areas and it’s our role to direct them to feel it in the right place,” said Aly.

Aly will also be doing a workshop on how to strengthen your client’s neck as they move through a Pilates workout, noting that this is a problem area for a growing number of clients.

“More and more people are noticing the weaknesses of their neck. A lot of this relates to posture. Our clients are on their phones and computers a lot, they’ve all got the forward head posture and it increases gravity and the pressure on the neck. We need to take care of the neck strength,” she said.

“When it comes to exercise you need to pay attention to how clients move their heads. The head weighs 9 to 15 pounds and in our classes, we ask them to move and their heads feel so heavy. They recognise they have weaknesses so we need to help them build the strength. Everything is leading to strength – it’s the most effective way to work.

“In exercises like the Hundreds or the Roll Up, I try and educate that the stronger your neck and your core is the less you will use your neck as a structure. We don’t want to just use the cervical

spine itself, we want to use the muscular system inside of us. We want to lift from the core, in and up. Strengthening those small neck muscles and the superficial and deep ones.

“In the Roll Up we think of that giant front c-curve shape we’re creating in the whole of the front body that helps you lift your head. We’re not just relying on that flexible range of motion that we have in the cervical spine but controlling the muscles around it. The core and your neck are always in communication with each other. We want to move the whole spine as one strong connected piece. We want to unify and have all parts of the spine working together.

“In this workshop, I’ll start like I do with most of my clients. We’ll begin with isometric movements using your hands, then use the theraband, magic circle and neck stretcher. I go from the easiest way to move the structure of the neck and then strengthen the musculature around the neck and then introduce more advanced props,” said Aly.

These are just a couple of the topics Aly will be covering. Learn from Aly at this year’s PAA Conference.

**Alexandra Bohlinger** has taught Pilates in the original classical method for almost 20 years. Aly is presenting at the PAA Conference this August on a range of topics. The conference runs for three days in Melbourne, Australia and includes other prominent Pilates professionals including Brett Howard, Pilates Elder Lolita San Miguel and a selection of Australian presenters. You can view the full agenda [here](#). It’s not too late to [register](#).



Join us for

## 3 Days of Pilates Inspiration, Exploration and Motivation

DAY  
**25-27**

MONTH  
**August**

YEAR  
**2023**

Workshops filling fast!

- ★ Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne
- ★ 3 days of Pilates workshops
- ★ 29 inspiring workshop presenters
- ★ 44 practical and theory-based workshops
- ★ masterclasses to start or close your day
- ★ Cocktail Party
- ★ ESSA CPD/ PAA PDP (15)

**Book Now**



Cynthia Lockard



Alexandra Bohlinger



Brett Howard



Lolita San Miguel



Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne

# Instructor Spotlight: Jorja Purdie

WE SPEAK WITH PILATES INSTRUCTOR JORJA PURDIE ABOUT THE START OF HER PILATES CAREER AND HER TEACHING FOCUS

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

**A.** My name is Jorja and I am from Alice Springs, I have grown up in a relatively large family; my mum, dad, older brother and two younger sisters. I moved to Melbourne a year ago to start Pilates teacher training with National Pilates Training (NPT). It was quite a big move for me, the first of my tight-knit family unit to move away from home. I started teaching Pilates as a trainee Instructor around late October 2022 at Aligned for Life Pilates Carlton and Moonee Ponds (AFLP) and I'm very excited and grateful to continue teaching there once qualified.

**Q. How did you discover Pilates?**

**A.** My first experience with Pilates was when I was around 14, through my ballet training. One of my teachers took some time off to complete their Pilates training and then brought it back to the studio. It was introduced to us to complement our ballet training and I continued with it once a week until I finished high school. Once I started full-time ballet training it also became the start of each day. Over time I fell in love with the movement and how it made me feel. I felt strong, invigorated and in tune with my body. The more I learnt about Pilates the more I wanted to learn about Pilates, so I decided to enrol in a teacher training course.

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

**A.** I would like to think that every day I walk into the studio I am open to learning new things whether it is from mentors, peers or clients. I love learning about the things I am passionate about. I am surrounded by passionate Pilates people in my work but in particular I am greatly inspired by Kath Banks, the owner of the Moonee Ponds AFLP studio. She has been a legendary mentor, so full of wisdom and guidance. She constantly inspires me with her self-mastery of the method, her ability to read people and give them their 'goldilocks', not too hot, not too cold but just the right exercise. She has a way of guiding you to explore and question the method to make you a more competent Instructor. I always leave the studio feeling like I could take on the world!

Jorja teaches at [Aligned for Life Pilates \(Moonee Ponds and Carlton Locations\)](#) in Melbourne, Australia.



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

**A.** The student is only as good as the teacher. To look inwards when something isn't quite right. Have you programmed the correct exercise/level for this client, have you taken into account their posture and their habits or hobbies? Are you cueing too much and overloading the client with information or are you cueing based on the client's learning styles? Can you as the Instructor adapt to what your client needs from you to get the best out of them.

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

**A.** I've learnt to encourage clients to focus less on phrases like 'I've been doing that wrong'. It's not wrong it is only an evolution of their understanding of the method or exercises through the layering of information over time.

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

**A.** Well of course it is National Pilates Training (NPT).

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

**A.** I love the versatility of the reformer but I think personally I really enjoy being on the high barrel. I told my teacher that I really wanted to master the high barrel swan as it was one of the exercises I found the most challenging. Through the new barrels program, I had a lot of fun for a seemingly simple piece of apparatus!

**Q. How do you stay motivated?**

**A.** A lot of people motivate me but I think that clients motivate me when I can see their knowledge of the Pilates method has really grown or they tell me how much they've benefitted from our sessions. It always makes me happy to know that in some way, big or small, I am making someone's life that little bit better.

**Q. What makes you laugh the most?**

**A.** I can always have a good laugh with my mates.

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

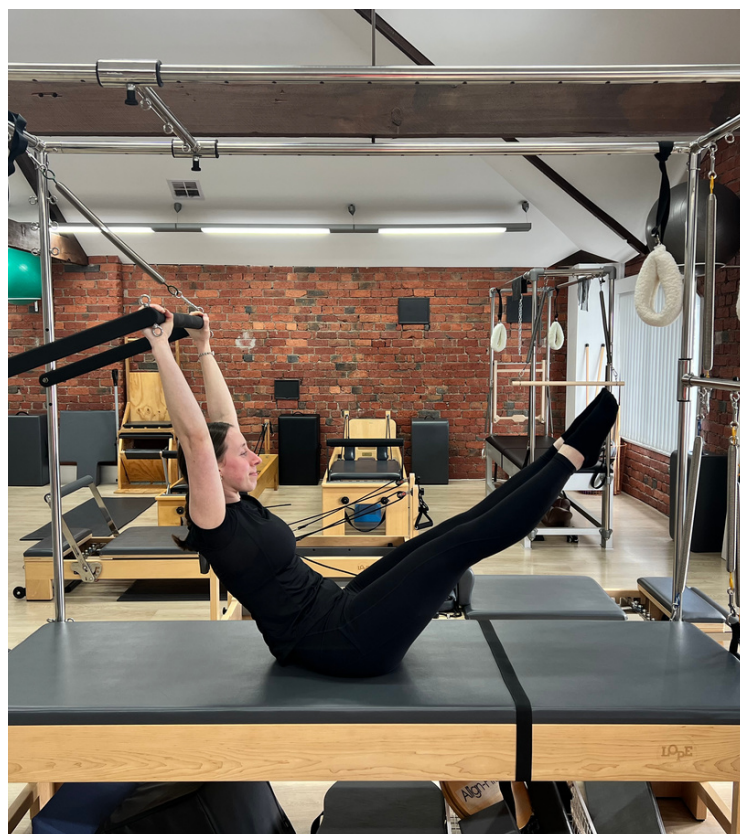
**A.** One of two very different ways. I either spend the day with friends or family outside in the sunshine or spending all day in bed crocheting and watching TV relaxing.

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

**A.** I only own a few pairs but find I like going barefoot where I can.

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

**A.** I'm pretty lucky in that my family are all pretty involved in my Pilates journey and have had a go at Pilates a few times when they visit so they know what it's like from a client perspective. I also talk to them a lot about all the other aspects of Pilates that aren't just about doing the exercises. Being a Pilates instructor is so much more than just knowing the exercises, you have to know how to teach them to anyone and be able to adapt to different personalities to give the client the best session possible.



**Subscribe for free  
now to  
The Pilates Journal**



**Stretch out  
Aim high**

**Find your  
strength**

Grow with AUSactive  
Membership from \$15/month\*

Become A Member



AUSactive

\*Professional membership only. Limited time, offer ends 30 June 2023



ausactive.org.au

# Grow your business to own a second studio

THINKING OF OWNING A SECOND STUDIO? UNDERSTAND THE PROS AND CONS OF EXPANDING YOUR FOOTPRINT

by *Cie'Jai Zarb*



When you step into MIA studios in Paddington there's a sense that there's going to be fun had in this space while you get your workout done and that's exactly how owners Robin and Kamilla Tate created it.

In October 2019, Tate and Kamilla opened their studio in Sydney's east after almost 12 months of back and forth with the local council. "We were financially committed so this studio was going to happen no matter what...it was all about trying to get the stars to align," said Tate.

And so My Inner Addiction (MIA) studios, named after their daughter Mia, was born. "Kamilla came up with the name for the studio and the brand concept that our Pilates studio was a good addiction to have. It wasn't long before we found clients who shared the same values as us.

"When you come to MIA studios Kamilla and I wanted to create a really simple ethos. We want you to have fun, get a good workout,

not take things so seriously, and build a connection with our instructors and the broader community. We saw lots of friendships developed off the back of our first studio.

"What sets us apart is how we encourage each of our instructors to bring their own style of teaching and their own personality into the classes. It gives them real freedom. All of our teachers have points of difference and are motivating in their style," said Tate.

To start our first studio Tate and Kamilla had to take a leap of faith. "Sure you always worry about if it doesn't work what will happen. And when you start to run your first Pilates business you quickly discover that when you do one step you suddenly have five other things to do. There's always going to be the unknown. You need to remain flexible and don't be surprised when things pop up. The fear is always way worse than the reality. Sure there were sleepless nights and at the time we endured Covid lockdowns but it didn't stop us.

"With full classes and engaged clients in our first studio, some of our clients started asking if we would be opening a second location. We started to casually look around and before we knew it we saw something suitable in Alexandria in Sydney's Inner West. The space fit our brand style and was in an up-and-coming area so we decided to jump at it. Not because we felt we had to. There wasn't any real urgency. The right thing just happened at the right time," said Tate.

"So in September 2022, Tate and Kamilla decided to open a second studio. "We had two kids at the time and another on the way. We thought we'd have it all up and running before baby three arrived, but it didn't work out that way. In fact, the second studio in Alexandria opened eight days after our baby Issi was born. We had two big life events happening at the same time but we made it work.

"We knew that the second studio had to bring the same culture and vibe that MIA was now known for, however, we were conscious that it would be different people in a different area coming to our classes so the second studio had to have its own style. We made sure it was the same fit out, the same tools and experience but in our view, every location should offer a slightly different experience. As long as it remained fun and welcoming to everyone then we were confident it would build more members and more community.

"I would say opening the second studio wasn't as fearful as the first. With the first you have so much to set up, consider and get going, with the second you've already built your brand, your website, and your accounting software, you don't have to start from scratch. We were also able to leverage the teachers across both studios which definitely helped. There are economies of scale to be made and in my opinion, there is less risk and the upside is bigger. Sure you double the teacher costs and the rent but you have an opportunity to double your profit.

"The flip side is that twice as many things can go wrong. It's more challenging to cover two studios. I can't be in two places at once. You have to manage twice as many members but we're fortunate that we've got really good staff who handle our clients super well. Our open communication style means our team members feel supported. We're very reliant on our staff and we want to look after them and reward them well. We want them to feel very much



*“We made sure it was the same fit out, the same tools and experience but in our view, every location should offer a slightly different experience.”*

a part of the team. We’ve had a lot of the same team for the past three years.

“Another key learning was realising that what worked in Paddington may not always work for Alexandria. A great example is that early mornings are super popular for Paddington so we did the same at Alexandria and quickly learnt that night classes were much more popular. We also put on more beginner classes in Alexandria, which also made a big difference.

“We also realised that we needed to teach equally across both studios. When we got the second studio our members asked if we would be teaching less at the first studio as they always enjoyed our classes. So we made a conscious decision to make sure that whoever took over these classes had a similar style and the clients enjoyed them just as much so they had a seamless transition from one of us to one of our other teachers. In my opinion, it’s always good to have a mix of different teachers. Sure we were worried if we taught less that it might become an issue, but we quickly realised how beneficial it could be.

“Between the two of us, we now split our teaching hours between the two studios and I spend more of my time responding to every member’s enquiry. We don’t have Studio Managers, that’s all on me. I do it because I want to know what’s going on, I want to have a relationship with my members, and we’re a reasonable small family business. We want to remain community-led, personable, small and nimble. We know that our members like that we are a

small boutique Pilates studio. We’re not about becoming a franchise, we’re all about doing what we do really well. Who goes to Starbucks now anyways?” observed Tate.

So what is Tate and Kamilla’s final advice on opening your second studio?

“Do it for the right reasons, not just for the money. Don’t sacrifice to churn out another studio. Keep the same ethos. Keep the same quality and make it true to who you are. Make it personalised, your clients will love it and in turn, you’ll create a successful business.”

**Robin and Kamilla Tate own both Padding and Alexandria [M.I.A Studios](#) in Sydney, Australia.**

# Upcoming courses

## BASI AUSTRALIA

The Mat Program , Mat and Reformer Program and Comprehensive Global Program are now offered in  
 Canberra - Pilates Centre Canberra - 19 May to 13 Aug  
 Sunshine Coast - Pointe Pilates Studio - 14 Apr - 30th July  
 Brisbane- BASI Pilates Academy Australia - 8 Sept - 3rd Dec  
 Perth - Rig Pilates - 1 Sept- 10 Dec

Find out more [basipilates.com.au/education/](https://basipilates.com.au/education/)

## BODY ORGANICS EDUCATION

The Tower of Power - Sydney - 21 July and Brisbane - 9-11 September

Springing this joint - Sydney - 13 October, Wamberal - 14 October and Brisbane - 4 November

Hashimoto's Disease - Bondi, Sydney - 15 October

Springing this Joint and Hashimoto's Disease - Canberra - 29 October

Is offered as an online course. There will be follow-up face-to-face courses in QLD, NSW and VIC, other states to follow.  
 A full event calendar can be found [here](#).

Find out more [www.bodyorganicseducation.com](http://www.bodyorganicseducation.com) or contact [info@bodyorganicseducation.com](mailto:info@bodyorganicseducation.com)

## REACH MOVEMENT HEALTH

Further your education with one of Reach's online or in-person workshops.

Online workshops include Pilates for Pregnancy, Visceral Mobilisation through Movement, LumboPelvic Rhythm with Lisa Jackson, Hands to Arms to Shoulders with Sally Anderson, or Load and Progression with Lanette Helene and much more.

Find out more [reachmovementhealth.com/continuing-education-programs-2023/](https://reachmovementhealth.com/continuing-education-programs-2023/)

## PILATES ITC

Blended (Online + In-Person) or Online (start anytime) options available.

(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

Enrol and start your online Coursework at any time ahead of your first in-Studio session!

QLD, SA, NSW – Enrol now for May Entry Points

WA – May Entry Point is sold out! Enrol now for July Entry Points.

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



## POLESTAR PILATES

Upcoming Continuing Education Courses include:

Complete Matwork Series: 22nd July - Perth and Sydney and 5th August - Melbourne.

Ultimate Reformer Series: 22nd July - Sydney, Melbourne 29th July and Perth 5th August.

Barrel of Fun with Kimberley Garlick - 21st July - Perth

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

Critical Reasoning for Rehabilitation with Shelly Power - 15-16 July - Sydney and 8-9 July - Perth

For a complete list of courses see the Polestar website [polestarpilates.edu.au/pilates-continuing-education/](https://polestarpilates.edu.au/pilates-continuing-education/)



# 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

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/](http://www.nationalpilates.com.au/)

## STUDIO PILATES

Matwork Course - 13-16 July - MEL, 3-6 Aug - NSW, 10-13 Aug - QLD  
 Reformer Course - 13-16 July - NSW, 30 Aug -3 Sept - QLD, 31 Aug -3 Sept - MEL  
 Platinum Instructing Course - 17-22 July - QLD, 9-14 Aug - NSW

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/](http://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/](http://tensegritytraining.com.au/accredited-training/)



## Feedback

Please send us your feedback, we'd love to understand more of what you learn more of.  
 Contact us at [hello@pilatesjournal.com](mailto:hello@pilatesjournal.com)

*Feature your product or  
business here. Contact us  
for more information.*

[WWW.PILATESJOURNAL.COM](http://WWW.PILATESJOURNAL.COM)



*THE* PILATES JOURNAL

[HELLO@PILATESJOURNAL.COM](mailto:HELLO@PILATESJOURNAL.COM)  
[PILATESJOURNAL.COM](http://PILATESJOURNAL.COM)