

How to Create a Heartfelt Partner Pilates Program

There's a reason Pilates is so popular: It's a well-rounded and fundamentally sound practice. But even the most classical studio owners and instructors should look to spice up their routines from time-to-time to keep their students engaged and new clients coming in the door. If you're looking to offer a fresh new class, listen to your heart this February and put together a Partner Pilates program that promotes the mind-body connection between not one, but two people – either one of which could be a potential new member.

Follow these proven practices to execute your Partners Pilates program to perfection:

Create a Marketing Plan

After all, if no one comes, you will have done a lot of work for nothing. You can add incentive by putting together a “bring a friend for free” campaign or by offering a small prize like a cleverly branded workout towel. Take it a step further and get creative by providing branded champagne glasses so your students can enjoy a mimosa and unwind after completing a successful morning class. From there, you will want to consider designing something that visually creates awareness, whether you use printed out flyers or create a cleverly constructed social media campaign.

Adjust to Your Audience

Partner Pilates classes can be designed to encompass a variety of programming options, from intense variations to easy exercise selections, so adjust your program based on your expected audience. To make things easier, look to

identify the following characteristics in your students: Pilates experience, fitness level and approximate age. Also, use your marketing campaign to reinforce the class design and attract your ideal demographic.

Address the Adjustments

There is a lot that goes into a good partner class. Students have to cooperate with their partner, or they will knock them over. Think about how to set up and transition from exercise-to-exercise and keep everyone moving. Consider what partner variations add to the experience versus and how to leverage that. Also, establish how you will communicate with such a large crowd, as it's sure to vary from your normal classes. Lastly, think about how to make it fun with the new dynamic!

Ensure Everyone is Comfortable

If it is open to all including people who are just friends, ask yourself, "Will they be comfortable doing the exercises you have chosen?" While snuggling side to side for the side kick series, is ideal for romantic couples, it would make most friends feel strange. If it is non romantic, have them place their base leg feet to stabilize the work and activate the bottom leg.

Think Outside the Box

Remember to think out of the box with partner classes – don't limit yourself to just the mat. For example, you can move from Spine Stretch Forward where students are back-to-back enjoying each other's proprioception to Small Barrel Arm Circles. Have students bring their legs together and when one folds forward the other articulates back, extending the spine and reaching the arms. When they lift up, they fold forward, and the other student gets to enjoy the opening and stretch. Also, optimize flow sequence and try to

limit body position changes.

Practice Your Class Cues

Practice cueing the class. Even though you might teach every day, you probably don't teach Partner work every day. Rehearse your set up cues, execution cues, powerhouse cues, as well as what they should focus on in terms of working with a partner. In simple terms, let them know what they are providing in terms of resistance, assistance and opposition.

Plan the Workout

Planning the workout is possibly the most fun, but also the most time-consuming. Start with a theme. Think beyond just holidays and brainstorm to create authentic ideas that are sure to excite your students. Also, try sharing Pilates ideologies such as, "cooperate don't compete," and "share the secret" – all good places to start with any Pilates workout plan.

However you craft your class, be sure to do one thing – put the necessary effort into making your Partner Pilates class an authentic experience that generates excitement and appreciation from all those who attend. Your hard work will not go unnoticed, as your efforts will show in the form of membership sales and community buzz.

This article was written by Zoey Trap, MS.