

Studio Spotlight: MyTraining Studio, Helsinki, Finland

October is National Physical Therapy Month. To honor those in this important profession, we spotlight physical therapist Mikko Utecht and his physical therapy studio MyTraining.

Earlier this year, we looked at how Pilates can [greatly benefit male clients](#) and athletes in sports as diverse as basketball, baseball and even weightlifting. This insight comes courtesy of Mikko Utecht, Peak Pilates MI and a professional physical therapist. As the founder of MyTraining in Helsinki, Finland, he uses the balance, connection and beauty of Pilates to safely fulfill clients' physical therapy needs.

We spoke with Mikko about his studio's philosophy and how they integrate Pilates training into their physical therapy sessions.

Q: Tell us about MyTraining Studio in Helsinki.

A: We are a classical Pilates studio and a private physical therapy practice based in Helsinki. We are one of the first classical studios in Finland and, as of now, there are only 12 studios in the whole country!

Q: How did you get started in Pilates? What was your journey toward becoming a Peak Pilates MI?

A: I was completing my Masters in Physical Therapy and Health Sciences at the University of Jyväskylä.

I got interested in Pilates after experiencing some back issues and wanted to help my clients who were having problems with their pelvic floor and lumbo-pelvic rhythm. I have also been teaching group fitness since 2000 and wanted to direct my professional pathway to a method physically less demanding.



I really didn't know anything about Pilates when I started! My first Pilates certification was a clinical Pilates certification meant for physical therapists. When Peak Pilates MVe® program was being introduced to the Scandinavian market, I was approached by the local distributor if I would be interested in leading these programs. I jumped at the opportunity, and it lead me to the Peak Pilates mat work and comprehensive certifications, which I went through both in the U.S. and U.K. After that, our fearless leader Zoey Trap was arranging a MI Boot Camp in California. We discussed attending it, and I have never looked back since.

Q: What kind of clients do you serve at MyTraining?

A: Our clients vary between age and gender. The youngest client we had was a 14-year-old boy with ADD, and one of my oldest clients was 92. People attending our small groups are either regular people who want to learn Pilates or get physically more fit, or they have been referred to us by a doctor or a hospital. These days, almost everyone has some

degree musculoskeletal issues or pains, so people come to us because we can incorporate both physical therapy and Pilates into the sessions. We take into considerations different contraindications, which require medical training.

Q: You also founded a therapy studio called FysioMU. How do you incorporate Pilates into your therapy studio?

A: In a sense, MyTraining and FysioMU studios are the same! I am quite often asked how much Pilates and physical therapy I do, and I always answer they are to me quite often the same thing. It doesn't matter if you come with a doctor's referral or not; we build the therapy and individual Pilates sessions based on the client's body's needs. Of course, all physical therapy isn't Pilates and vice versa, but combining both worlds usually gives us the best tools to help our clients.



Q: What is the most popular Pilates class that your studio offers?

A: It has to be both the Circuit Class as well as our Chair Class. People like the fact that they have a program to follow when they come to our Circuit Class, and they need to know the work or they learn it very fast! Also, the ladies in our Chair Class never give up during a class. The wunda chair is such a wonderful piece of equipment, and what a challenge it gives! Ever tried 55 minutes on just a wunda chair? It's quite the challenge!

Q: What is your favorite Pilates class to teach, or what is your favorite apparatus to teach on?

A: There's not a particular class I like to teach as they are all so different. If you ask my clients what my favorite apparatus are, it would be the foot corrector and sandbags. You need to build it from the ground up. Personally, I love the Cadillac. It is such a versatile piece of equipment and allows you to work with so many different bodies.

Q: Why did you choose Peak Pilates® equipment for your club?

A: I work closely with one of Peak Pilates Scandinavian distributors, and they introduced me to Peak Pilates equipment. Having used Stott equipment previously, I liked the springs from the classical systems more, and Peak Pilates has them. Also, the fact that you can do alterations or modifications based on your personal and business needs made it an easy choice.



Q: In your opinion, what makes Peak Pilates® equipment special?

A: They are durable and long lasting. Joseph made his equipment to last a lifetime. I feel like the same is true to Peak Pilates equipment. If you take care of them, they will stand the test of time.

Q: What other kinds of fitness classes do you provide at MyTraining?

A: As we are combined Pilates studio and a physical therapy private practice, we don't offer other classes as majority of our clients are private session clients. Every now and then, you will see us in the park during summer teaching an outdoor Pilates or a circuit class.

Q: Do you have any special plans for the autumn and winter seasons at MyTraining Studio?

A: Autumn is always a time to prepare for Christmas and the New Year. It is kind of end-of-a-season time. At the end of October, we start offering mulled wine to our clients leading up to Christmas. Autumns in Finland are beautiful, especially this year, with all the fall colors. Our studio has big windows, so the autumn colors come to play.

This article was contributed by Greg Mantell, Director of Content Management – Mad Dogg Athletics.

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