

Pilates Day

How Do You Celebrate Pilates Day?

Pilates Day is the first Saturday of May – May 2nd this year! The day is now a worldwide celebration amongst Pilates studios, teachers and students alike. However, the day got its origins when the Pilates Method Alliance (PMA), co- founded by Colleen Glenn-Wilson and Kevin Bowen, established the first Pilates Day in 2003 as a fundraiser for the PMA Exam.

Kevin Bowen and his team hosted their first event at The Eden Roc Hotel in Miami, Florida. There were classes offered by Jillian Hessel, Mari Winsor and Lolita San Miguel, who taught Body Walk on the Boardwalk in Miami Beach. It was quite a line up! There was even a Pilates Expo with sponsors and demonstrations that first year. Tracy Wilson Mourning, founder of Honey Shine Inc., was also a part of the celebration. Her organization is a mentoring program for young girls to help encourage the balance of mind, body and soul and empower their futures. What a great blend of like-mindedness!

Pilates Day was also created to bring awareness to the work of Joseph Pilates and help to share his method broadly. Now, there are a variety of ways to join in the festivities. I reached out to some fellow Peak Pilates® Master Instructors and studio owners to find out how they participate in Pilates Day.

Courtney Weis at Harbor Athletic Club had a Pilates Day event called GRRoW which stands for the Golden Retriever Rescue of Wisconsin. In the past, they have offered free mat and reformer classes all day with donations to the organization. She said that “It was very successful and fun for the clients and the dogs.”

I surveyed a few local Montana Peak Pilates® studios and there

have been a number of way in which they've partook in Pilates Day: offering complimentary mat classes, sharing history and quotes from *Return to Life, Pints and Pilates* and teaming up with local breweries, hosting open houses with cocktails and demos, organizing raffles and Q&As with giveaways.

There's even Pilates in the Park, depending on how Mother Nature is feeling, in May in the Rocky Mountains. And last year my studio's Pilates Day was actually celebrated on Joe's birthday, December 9th. All of my clients enjoyed party hats, balloons and party blowers. We used the party hats as a reminder to lengthen through the crown of the head (a great cue any day), and the other party favors were used for breathing exercises resembling the Breathacizor.

What to do if we are still in these circumstances on May 2, 2020...? Consider virtual solutions, like offering free Mat classes on Instagram, Facebook, Google Hangout, YouTube or Zoom. Schedule a group FaceTime call with clients and having them share how Pilates has benefitted them and maybe raise a glass to have virtual cheers!

Sara Talbert Peak MI of B Pilates Boutique suggested a Leg Pull Front Support Challenge via Peak Pilates® Instagram. Sara also suggested finding creative ways and places to perform the exercise! She comments, "This could help grow our community's social media exposure as Peak Teachers."

Jolie Becker Peak MI of The Pines Studio is a sponsor for a Pilates Day event in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She mentioned, "The goal is to get Pilates People together and build a stronger community and awareness." This event has now become a virtual fundraiser with classes, discussions and donations to help support the community of studios.

In these unusual times, I feel we are lucky to be able to come together virtually to take and teach classes and connect with our Pilates collective.

Keep moving and stay healthy and strong!

This article was contributed by Shauna Laszlo, an MI out of Montana.