

Dementia, Alzheimer's and Movement

By Zoey Trap, MS

“Dementia” is an umbrella term for a lot of conditions with various causes. The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, accounting for 60-80% of dementia cases. Vascular Dementia is the 2nd most common form of dementia, most often caused by a lack of circulation to the brain. These are very different diseases with different causes, symptoms, and treatments – however, there is also overlap between the two, and exercise and movement can play a helpful roll in living with both.

“By some estimates, 1.7% of 65- to 69-year-olds have dementia and the risk of developing it doubles every five years after that. At present, about 50 million people around the world have the condition, a number expected to rise to 82 million by 2030 and 150 million by 2050. Most of the new cases are in the developing world, where populations are rising and ageing.”[\[1\]](#)

I knew about Dementia – I had even had students in the early stages of Alzheimer's, but I didn't really learn about the impact it can have on both the individual and their family, until my own mother was struck. Diagnosed with Vascular Dementia, she came to live with us. We experienced the daily mood swings, Sun Downers, personality changes. I learned again, the value of exercise and movement on preserving function and improving quality of life. The more my mom moved, the better her cognition was, the better her appetite became, and the stronger both mentally and physically she grew (*image left*).



Pamela Garcia's mother had Alzheimer's (*image right*). It is a different journey, but movement still played a large role in her life as she continued to enjoy her Pilates and gardening. Today, my sister is in the middle stage of Alzheimer's, and I am learning new skills and ways to help her, one of which is our daily walks, her workouts, and how to relate to her in new ways.

This winter as Pam and I were chatting, we started comparing our experiences and as we realized how little the subject is talked about publicly, and how great it would have been if we had known more before we walked down these paths. Out of this conversation sprung up the idea to offer a workshop on Dementia, Alzheimer's and movement. The reality is that sooner or later someone you love will suffer from dementia, and you will now have some information and a place to start the journey from.

If you want to learn more about the differences in these dementia diseases, how movement can impact them, how to provide solutions in a studio setting to both the individuals with dementia and/or their caregivers, we hope you will join us. Going live from *Pure Pilates*, Pam's studio in Boston, we will be joined by a group of teachers who have personal

experience living with and/or working with dementia. We will dive deep into theory, and then move onto practical studio matters, and end with caring for the caregivers. Gain hope in the thought of how it may be so different than you anticipated! This is 3 hours devoted to a subject that is so important. I hope you can join us.

[1] [The rising prevalence of dementia is a global emergency, The Economist, \(Aug. 27, 2020\)](#)

Pilates for Dementia and Alzheimer's – Virtual Workshop

When: Friday, June 23, 2023. 2:00-5:00pm Eastern (New York)

To Register for North & South America/Asia:

<https://peakpilates.com/pilates-for-dementia-and-alzheimers-virtual-workshop-june-23-2023/>