

Why “Key Concepts” are Key!

There are certain alignment and movement principles that guide Pilates and yoga – really, all movement practices. We call these Key Concepts because they are the key to good posture and biomechanics. Here are the main concepts with simple explanations.

The Powerhouse is the core, but more. This area includes not only the abdominals, gluteals and inner thighs, but all of the muscles that cross the lumbopelvic girdle. This is the area that stabilizes and guides movement. The critical deep stabilizers here are the transverse abdominals, inner obliques, multifidus and pelvic floor.

When we employ the ‘Scoop,’ we lift the abs in and up and help stabilize the lumbopelvic girdle to decompress the spine.

Centerline is an imaginary line that dissects the body from side-to-side. It helps us to work with and develop symmetry, and creates awareness of working in a more balanced way. It also contributes to building inner thigh strength and stamina.

The Box runs shoulder-to-shoulder and hip-to-hip, and it’s used to help us work square and even. The Inner Box runs bottom rib to bottom rib and ASIS to ASIS, and it reminds us to pull the abs in and up to keep the waist long and the spine elongated.

Bring the Key Concepts alive in your life.

Start with just one concept – the Powerhouse, for instance. Next time you go out for a walk or run, tune into just one aspect of the Powerhouse, maybe your abdominals. Check in with yourself. Can you feel them working to stabilize? Is their movement in synch with the demands placed on your body? Play with engaging them firmly, letting them go, and then find the sweet spot.

Next move on to your glutes. Lazy butts don't just drive us nuts, they contribute to back pain and a host of movement and orthopedic issues. As you push off your back leg, can you feel your gluteals activate? When you finish your walk or run, are your quads on fire though your gluteals and hamstrings feeling left out? Try to pick one concept per workout to focus on. Soon, you'll have your Pilates Key Concepts working for you!

Written by Zoey Trap, MS.