

Peak Pilates® Master Instructor Karen Ingram | United Kingdom



Why did you start taking Pilates classes?

In my early 20's I had surgery on my lower back. Five years later my back problems came back tenfold. I was put on the list for a second back operation, which I desperately wanted to avoid. I started to explore other ways to get my health back. I tried everything from mainstream treatments like physio to eliminating foods like cheese! Eventually I came across Pilates and my road to recovery began. Relatively quickly I became pain free and in time the neurosurgeon I was under said I no longer needed surgery. I wanted to learn more about Pilates and to help other people suffering with lower back pain so I went on to train to become a Pilates Instructor. Today I can windsurf, ski, run... really anything I like as long as I keep regular Pilates practice as part of my life.

What inspired you to become a [Certified Peak Pilates® Instructor](#) and then a Peak Pilates Master Instructor?

I was attending a Pilates development weekend in London run by Body Control Pilates and attended a workshop being run by Zoey Trap. The workshop was one of the most inspiring Pilates presentation I had ever been to. I stayed behind to chat with Zoey and asked her how I could learn more about Peak Pilates® approach to teaching and classical Pilates. She suggested I went off to Belgium to do my Peak Pilates Certification Level I, so I did. I loved it! I have always loved teaching and training people to teach, so when I had the opportunity to apply to become a Peak Pilates MI I jumped at the chance.

What do you love about teaching Pilates classes?

I love to see the change in people's bodies, to be able to make people smile and loose themselves and their daily stresses in that one hour of Pilates. The most rewarding moments are when someone tells you they no longer have back pain or that they went fishing for the first time in 3 years and it didn't hurt. One of my clients turned up to the studio last summer in a convertible classic Morgan sports car. He had a massive grin on his face. He told me he hadn't been able to get in or out of his car for 3 years because of back pain, and that now having done Pilates he was back behind the wheel! Not many jobs give that kind of satisfaction.

What is your favorite apparatus?

Right now I love the [High Ladder Barrel](#). I love the way the shape fits the spine and supports people at the same time as challenging and opening out the body. I think it looks beautiful in the studio.

What makes Pilates such a great workout?

The genius of it! The whole concept of working from the inside out and building life long well being. I love that I will still be able to do Pilates when I'm 100 years old and get a workout. It's the depth of the method that is magical, the better I get at Pilates the more of a workout it becomes as I just work deeper and more strongly.

Share a memory from your experience as a teacher/coach/presenter that embodies the value of being a Certified Peak Pilates Instructor or Peak Pilates Master Instructor?

Knowing how and when to progress a person in Pilates is key. Although I had taught Pilates for a few years, it was my education with Peak Pilates that first gave me clear guidelines for how to successfully progress someone so they keep being challenged by Pilates, but are safe. Fairly soon after gaining my PPS1 (as it was then called), I began teaching a new client. He suffered with many issues including arthritis that caused him a lot of pain. As a professional choreographer movement was essential for him. He had been having Pilates sessions in a dance school in London for many years but felt like he had been offered only the 'safe' basic exercises, he had spent hours doing knee folds and rib cage arms. Over the months we added more and more challenging exercises, using a range of equipment. My Peak Pilates education gave me the confidence to really understand when my client was ready for a new challenge and how to progress him safely. In the end we both grew together, me as a teacher and my client on his journey to be the best body he could be.



What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about becoming a Certified Peak Pilates Instructor?

Teaching Pilates can be really rewarding. The [Peak Pilates courses](#) are a great way to develop your teaching skills and deepen your knowledge of Pilates. The more you put into the course the more you will get out of it. Enjoy the time spent practicing your own technique, and practising and observing teaching. Never hesitate to ask questions.

What's one of your favorite motivational quotes?

“Reach for the top of the tree and you may get to the first branch but reach for the stars and you’ll get to the top of the tree.”

Do you have a hero in the Pilates community, someone who deserves recognition for their leadership?

In the 1970's Alan Herdman brought the Pilates method to the UK having studied the method in New York. If it wasn't for Alan I may never have come across Pilates. I owe him a debt of gratitude for bringing Pilates to the UK.

Is there anything about you that would surprise people?

Following an audition I was once offered a job on QVC as a presenter... I turned them down! (It's a long story!)

General Biographical information:

Karen has more than 15 years of experience of teaching Pilates. She is a REPs level 4 Lower Back Pain specialist and is passionate about returning people to health through Pilates and movement. Karen is an experienced teacher trainer and in addition to being a Peak Pilates® Master Instructor is a National Nordic Walking Coach. Karen has also trained with Body Control Pilates and is co-founder of Barefoot Studio. She has presented both in the UK and Internationally. Karen loves teaching, loves Pilates and is known for her fun and dynamic style of teaching.

List relevant professional certifications in health and fitness (define acronyms):

REPs (Register of Exercise Professionals) Level 4 Lower Back Pain Specialist

REPs (Register of Exercise Professionals) Level 3 Pilates

Peak Pilates PPC1 and PPC2

Peak Pilates MVe MI

INWA (international Nordic Walking Federation) National Coach

What year did you join the Peak Pilates Master Instructor Team?

2013

Where do you teach Pilates classes and/or Pilates Certifications/ Continuing Education workshops:

Barefoot Studio, Cowbridge near Cardiff, UK

Barefoot Studio Ltd

Unit 50, Vale Business Park, Llandow, Cowbridge,
Vale of Glamorgan, CF71 7PF

Phone: 01446 775772

Mobile: +44 07958 655621

Skype: bfskaren

www.barefootstudio.co.uk

www.barefootstudiostore.co.uk

www.exelpoles.co.uk

Learn more about our Peak Pilates Master Instructor team and [subscribe](#) to our newsletter today!