

Pilates for Life – Upcoming CEC Workshop!

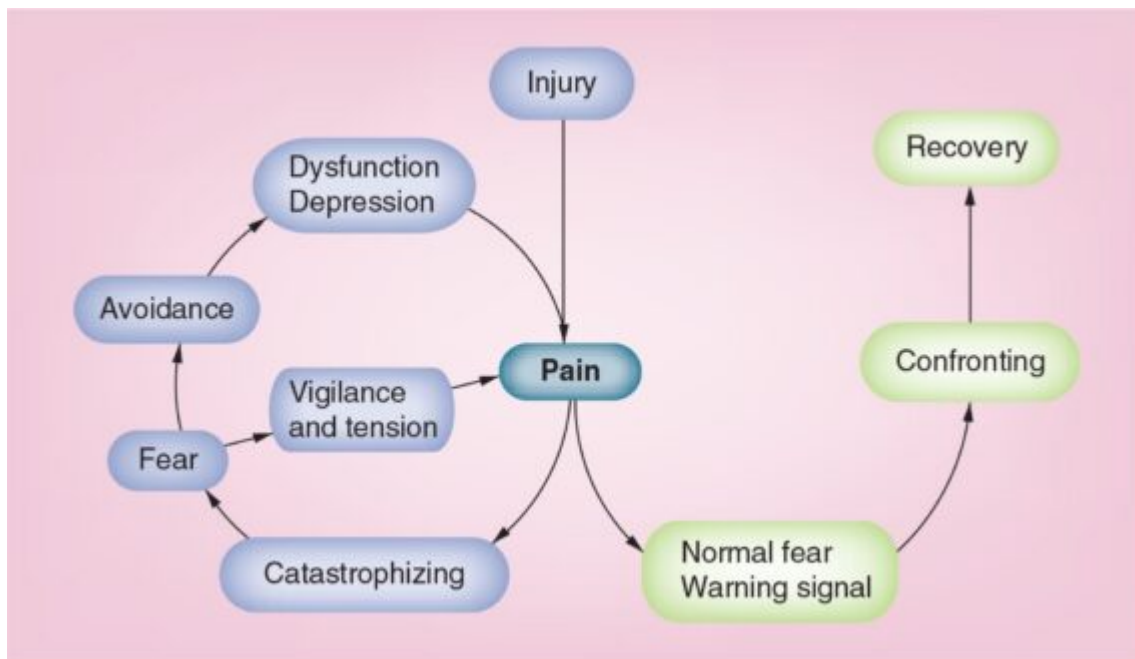
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My Dad has just had to give up driving. He could no longer turn his head enough to check his blind spot, or twist to look behind him to reverse. In fact, as I watch my parents age, I see so many things they can no longer do. My Mum needs assistance getting out of a chair and now uses a lift rather than the stairs. They both walk less distance, move more slowly, lose balance more easily and look less confident. As their movement quality and ability decreases their life gets smaller and smaller. But is this inevitable as we age?

It is not just older people whose life becomes limited if they lose the ability to perform 'daily living tasks.' I am sure you have all had clients who are limited by injury or weakness. Or who avoid movements because of the fear of pain or injury.

Pilates teachers are in a unique position to work with people to rebuild lost skills and to give people the confidence to get moving again. This requires more than just understanding movement, we need to build trust and work with people's thoughts, feelings and emotions.

The Fear Avoidance Model is a great tool for helping us understand how life can become limited by the fear of movement. (Lethem et 1983)



Say you have a day in the garden digging and weeding, imagine you pull a muscle in your back. That night you feel sore, but you are not worried, it's normal. You know a soak in a hot bath will help and you make a note to yourself to maybe not do so much in one day next time. Your body 'confronts' or repairs the injury and you fully recover within a few days and weeks.

Let's take the same scenario and go down a different path. You have a day in the garden digging and weeding and pull a muscle in your back. That night your feel sore. This is bad news, you imagine you have done something serious like you've slipped a disc in your back. What if you have to take time off work? The next day you still feel pain and start to move in a guarded way. There is tension in your body, and you are hyper-vigilant, noticing the slightest twinge. You begin to avoid bending and generally moving less. As the days and weeks pass, you use your body less and less, which gets you down and increases your pain. Continuing pain convinces you even more that you really must have hurt yourself. You begin to believe that bending forwards is actually bad for you (someone once told you to only ever pick stuff up by keeping your back straight and bending your knees). You become more fearful of certain movements... you are definitely in a downward spiral.

Teaching Pilates to a person who is afraid to move is a journey of trust. As teachers we can become fearful ourselves and it is super important that we don't leave out exercises which are challenging or that our clients are fearful of.

There are many tools you can use to help people to move better in daily life and to build confidence. Having a plan that you have worked up with your client is a key tool. Agree the path ahead together. Use homework and gradually reintroduce movements over time. Finding a 'hook' can be a good motivator. Set a goal, for example, getting back to a hobby the person loves, and agree incremental steps towards that goal. Be calm and use reassuring language as you teach with phrases like "sore but safe" and "motion is lotion."

In my CEC workshop "Pilates for Life" we will explore many other tools like breathing, visualization, finding and working in the 'change zone,' using Part C exercises to train for a task like driving or stair climbing.

Ageing is inevitable, but how we age is in our control! Pilates teachers can help people to move well their whole life and to experience the joy of movement rather than fear.

Come and join me on the **September 29, 2023 for the 2 hour CEC workshop 'Pilates for Life.'** Learn new ways to take Pilates beyond the studio to help your clients build confidence and move better in everyday life. Can't make it – register and request a recording!

Registration **for** **EMEA:**
<https://peaku.peakpilates.eu/peaku/pilates-for-life?instance=63e2642a2eec0c092a09a681>

Registration **for** **USA/Asia:**
<https://peakpilates.com/pilates-for-life-virtual-workshop-september-29-2023/>

Karen Ingram has a Professional Certificate in Pain Science

and Education from the University of South Australia. She has over 22 years of experience teaching Pilates and movement and specialises in chronic pain using a combination of movement and coaching. Karen is a Senior Master Instructor for Peak Pilates® an INWA Nordic Walking International Trainer. She is an author and teaches from her studio in Wales in the UK.