

Pilates for Mental Fitness

By Courtney Weis

Many of us, including myself, began Pilates for the physical practice. Initially, I was drawn to Pilates for the precision, the strength, the flexibility, and the balance challenges. With my steadfast focus on activating my powerhouse, articulating my spine, and opening my chest, I arrived on the mat or apparatus to work hard, stay strong and be fit in my “Pilates body.”

My “Pilates mind” arrived later in my journey. Moving rhythmically through the order with attention to my three anchors and my critical connections, the process became meditative. Time on the mat or apparatus became reliably comforting. The familiar feeling of being connected to the mat, reformer or Cadillac soothed my body but even more so, quieted my mind.

My body feels better after movement but my mental fitness increases leaps and bounds with my Pilates practice. I’ve learned, when I am anxious, stressed, or overwhelmed, Pilates clears my head. I then have the brain space to go about the rest of my day.

With a focus on the Pilates principles of breath and concentration, I move mindfully through the exercises which in turn cleanses my headspace. Adding music also alters my state of mind. Depending on my mood, music with a heavy beat and quick rhythm helps to jump start my day and focus my mind. On the other hand, chill, ambient music might be the trick to connect my mind and body.

A change of scenery, in particular, taking my mat outdoors, is a huge mental bonus. I find calm energy listening to birds sing, water flow, and trees sway in the breeze. Looking overhead to watch the clouds move is a reminder that change is

constant. Bodies and minds also continuously transform day to day. Listening to what both my body and mind need in my Pilates practice brings a different workout each day. The theme of the practice (breath, concentration, flow) shifts allowing me to focus on what I require.

Join me for a virtual workshop on **June 15 at 1:00PM Central Time – *Pilates for Mental Fitness***. Use your Pilates practice to help you maintain a state of well-being and cultivate awareness of how to think, behave and feel. Just as physical fitness provides us with an increased ability to respond to life in all its richness, mental fitness helps in the same way.

To Register: [Pilates for Mental Fitness – Virtual Workshop – June 15, 2023 – Peak Pilates – US/EN](#)