

Studio Spotlight: The Good Space, Houston, TX

We shine a long overdue spotlight on one of the most dedicated Peak Pilates® Education Centers on the planet; the Good Space in Houston, Texas! See how Master Instructor Melody Morton remains committed to her clients' wellness and her instructors' careers, all with a little Texas flair!

Although she will always be a Texas girl at heart, Melody Morton describes her fitness journey as starting in Los Angeles, California. There, Pilates and yoga studios were exploding in popularity. And after years of studying and participating in these movement systems, Melody was motivated to bring them back her native Houston. Alongside her mother (another independent businesswoman operating her own massage parlor), they endeavored to create a place that would boost their clients' health and esteem.

Fifteen years later, The Good Space is now one of the most dedicated and successful Peak Pilates® Education Centers in the world, having hosted hundreds of certification trainings and workshops. Melody remains committed not just to her clients' well-being, but also to her instructors by providing education and mentorship through Peak Pilates® Education.

We spoke with Melody about the origins of the Good Space, her Texas-themed classes, and her dedication to both her clients and staff.

Q: Tell us about The Good Space in Houston. How did your studio get started?

A: About 18 years ago, I moved back to Texas from Los Angeles. In LA, boutique yoga and Pilates studios were the rage. They were springing up everywhere. I cut my teeth on classes in Santa Monica and Venice where large studios still existed because the rent was still relatively cheap. I was inspired to create my own studio in Texas where I had grown up and had family and financial support. Realizing that life doesn't always give you a second chance, I got going with a loan from my mom. I took a leap and signed a 10-year lease on a 4,000 sq foot space and joined the Peak Pilates® team. I bought all the Peak Pilates® classical equipment line and signed on to become an Education Center in 2002. After leaping into your dream, you learn to fly. There is no other choice!



Q: How did you begin your Pilates journey? What was your path toward becoming a Peak Pilates MI?

A: Funnily enough, I took a random Pilates mat class and met an instructor (Deborah West) who had been trained by Colleen Glenn. Colleen, along with Clare Dunphy and our now fearless

leader Zoey Trap, started the Peak Pilates® education program. After class, I insisted she tell me how to get certified with Glenn, and that's how the journey of a thousand steps began... To be honest, I had been doing Pilates, but not classical Pilates. I had never felt a "connection." After a few lessons with West, and after many Pilates epiphanies, I fell in love with the classical order and Peak Pilates®.

Q: What kind of clients do you serve at The Good Space?

A: We serve all clients, but mostly women of all shapes, sizes and ages. Everyone can do Pilates!

Q: What is the most popular Pilates class that your studio offers?

A: After 2008, we switched gears and introduced our most popular classes to date: the group reformer class. It's affordable and offers a wide variety of exercises, yet it's still small enough to get personal instruction from the instructor.

Q: This month, our theme is retaining clients and building your business. What special benefits or offerings have you employed to retain clients or build your brand?

A: I've retained the same clients for many years. Some clients and instructors may leave, but most end up coming back. It's a simple formula: quality of equipment, instruction and a movement program developed by Peak Pilates®. Stay true to your roots, honor the space you reserve for clients to breathe and move better, and you can't go wrong. The education program is the foundation of my business and the source of instructors' success. A strong foundation in classical Pilates and quality equipment also set you forth on a path of success. Build on your foundation on these qualities, and you will retain and build trust with your clients.

Q: What is your favorite Pilates class to teach? What is your favorite apparatus to teach on?

A: Currently I'm having fun teaching the Rowdy Reformer. Caution: try not to get bucked off!

All jokes aside, in Houston, we have a Rodeo that's bigger than anything else in Texas. And every year, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo shows up along with a chili cook off, thousands of trail riders, and over 16,000 volunteers to help kids get scholarships to college. I capitalize on my roots and cue to the culture and devote an hour on the reformer, where I cue everything from the tush push to the Texas two-step as we gallop through the order...Pick up your reins cowgirls! Let's ride!

My favorite apparatus is the reformer because it provides a lot of flow for clients who are new to the work. It hooks them the fastest!



Q: Why did you choose Peak Pilates® equipment for your club?

A: It was two basic qualities: classical design and quality craftsmanship. I have 10 reformers, and along with all the other apparatus, I like the uniformity and streamlined design of the wood line.

Q: What other kinds of fitness classes do you provide at The Good Space?

A: We've had a lot of success with our PilatesStick program. We also offer barre and aerial yoga, as well hatha yoga classes.

Q: Spring is fast approaching, and we can't wait for the weather to warm up again! Do you have any special events planned at The Good Space in the coming months?

A: After the rodeo, we gear up for spring break. "Spring Into Fitness" is our theme. "Put the Breaks on for Spring and find a class that fits your back..." all a play on words. I like to have fun and play; being too serious is not good for business. Clients want to have fun, as well as work out. Fitness Pilates is all the rage right now, so we are developing fusion classes of suspended bodyweight training, chair and reformer. As a business, you have stay true to your roots, but develop and expand with the trends. Giddy up! I'll see you on the reformer!

This article was contributed by Greg Mantell, Director of Content Management – Mad Dogg Athletics.

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