

Virtual Workshop! Pilates Fundamentals for Sound Movement

By Zoey Trap, MS

Fundamentals, also known as Pre-Pilates exercises, have a wealth of applications to enrich the movement experience. These mini exercises can be used to evaluate movement, repattern incorrect movement into healthy movement patterning, increase circulation, and create overall awareness of how the body or a body part moves. While Fundamentals seem simple, they are actually sophisticated teaching tools that require a teacher to really see what is happening in the body—otherwise the student will just continue to do the movement in their habituated manner and no positive change will occur.

During your certification you probably learned a small number of Fundamentals and may be surprised to learn that there are so many more. Fundamentals teach a primary movement pattern and allow the student to focus on how they are moving while developing awareness of how to do things more efficiently. For this to occur, it requires the intention of the instructor to teach with touch, guiding the student into correct movement, or the integration of props with Fundamentals to help do the same. The important thing is to help the student to gain the ‘feel’ of the movement when done correctly. This can be difficult as students have developed movement strategies over time that have served them – albeit these same movement strategies may be contributing to pain or limiting performance.

Let’s take a common example and use a Fundamental most of you know well – Knee Folds. Susan, your student, is an athlete just starting Pilates and is gripping her hip flexors which is

causing pain in exercises such as One Leg Circle and limiting her performance. What's an instructor to do? You might introduce Knee Folds unilaterally allowing Susan to focus on correct patterning when flexing her hip. Guiding touch could help her feel how to lift up her leg and find the ease in the movement: teaching her how it feels when, as the femur comes up, it drops in the socket; and when the femur moves away, it slides forward and out. You might need to place a sponge ball at the back of her knee and ask Susan to engage her hamstrings to hold the ball as she executes the knee fold. This can 'turn off' the over engagement of her hip flexors and allow her to feel the movement with more ease; or you might lift Susan's hips up on a small barrel or Flexcushion™ to create that feel of ease and pelvic differentiation. What you want is for Susan to feel how to do it correctly, so she can replicate it in Pilates and in other movements in life.

So, as you can see Fundamentals are powerful tools for teaching that help an instructor to see and solve movement puzzles and to work with a plethora of individual needs! Of course, learning more Fundamentals provides instructors with more tools in their arsenal that can be used to help students avoid and work through injuries and improve performance and function. Pretty powerful stuff.

Join me Friday, August 23rd from 2:00-4:00 pm EDT (New York) for an in-depth exploration of Fundamentals that will give you not only more exercises to use in your teaching, but a deeper understanding of how to teach each Fundamental for maximal impact. If possible, bring a friend and work with each other. If are alone – don't worry – we will use a variety of props to change the feel and hone the execution. Can't make it? Register and request a recording.

Pre-Pilates Fundamentals: Tools for Teaching Movement & Helping the Body to Heal

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To Register: [USA/ Canada/ Asia](#)