

## The positive impact of the Pilates system on a country's health system

Every country has a different health system and every country has a different understanding of what its people need to stay healthy. In some countries you have to pay for your own hip replacement, in others your health insurance makes it possible. Some countries support people taking Pilates lessons, in others it's considered a private luxury.

In recent times public health has been under scrutiny.

What is health? Are you healthy when you are not in pain? Are you healthy when you are not prone to any infections? Are you healthy when you can tackle all obstacles life throws at you?

Josef Hubertus Pilates created his system of movement at a time where people were generally healthier than they are nowadays. But even he realized that his contemporaries had started to sit more and move less.

### CENTERING

He taught his clients/disciples/patients/friends/followers how to create movement from a strong center.

In our times of constant distraction and information overload, this is still of great value. You start from within.

If you are more concerned with the outside - be it looks, results or opinions of others - this is not beneficial for your well-being.

All movement coming from your center puts your body's inner suspension system of fascia muscles and bones into effective use.

### CONCENTRATION

Joe Pilates made his students concentrate on what they were doing in this particular moment, on where their bodies were in space, on what was happening inside their bodies. The equipment he developed support our bodies in many ways. You learn how to place your body parts. You learn to listen to the springs. You learn where to hook up the various contraptions. You are so focused that in this special hour you forget what's happening outside the studio, outside your body, even outside your place in the world.

It trains your mind and calms your mind at the same time - within the pilates studio and in your everyday life.

Any health system benefits from thusly trained patients. Any rehab after an operation or illness can be shorter and not as costly as a treatment paid for patients without this experience.

### RHYTHM FLOW

Every Pilates exercise has a special rhythm. You pick up this rhythm through the teacher's voice.

By moving from one exercise to the next, from one piece of apparatus to the next, from basic level to intermediate to advanced, you are in constant flow. As we are not machines, we don't move like them. As organisms that mainly consist of water, these fluid moves transfer to every day

life. Pilates trained people make practicing other sports look easy. In the Pilates system you learn that nothing stays the same, you are constantly changing position, trying to stay centered and focused and still keep moving. Thus your blood and lymph flow in a healthy way. You get used to adapting to life's changes.

Many people trained in this method don't need to see a doctor they know their bodies and its functioning. Much earlier than others do they feel when something is wrong. They can either fix their own issues or can make a timely appointment with health professionals.

## BREATH

Mister Pilates was adamant about breath training . I am sure that was due to the fact that Joe Pilates suffered from asthma.

He taught breathing into the side and back ribs while holding your low abdominals in. He wanted to increase lung capacity. No matter your type of Pilates background, we all learned not to hold our breaths. To move while breathing. There are even special breathing exercises and breathing apparatus to teach you how to combine breath with movement.

If you are used to inhaling and exhaling deeply, you can get rid of infections easier than if you have regularly experienced a breath that moves your diaphragm and your rib cage, massaging your inner organs you are in an advantageous position.

Any country with a healthcare system paid by all taxpayers should be happy to have inhabitants who know how to breathe deeply. These taxpayers should benefit from their investment into their own health. They should be supported considerably if they pay regularly for a serious movement training.

In Austria, only self-employed people get 100€ a year for their Pilates classes with a training facility or an instructor that fulfills certain demands.

## PRECISION

The instructions for Pilates exercises have to be precise. The performance should strive for precision. Depending on the level the students are in, they get their specific cues as to what has to be kept stable and what can be mobilized.

This precision helps your daily activities. It helps you move your body parts consciously first. After some practice your body knows what feels good and integrated and sustainable. This in the end furthers homeostasis.

Health insurance systems should welcome people who take their health into their own hands.

## CONTROL

J.H. Pilates called his system CONTROLGY. There is no haphazard positioning in Pilates. The order of the exercises play an important role in warming up the right body parts in the beginning to get the most of the rest of the body moving.

For example, starting the footwork exercises on the reformer warms up the biggest muscle group in our body; the quadriceps. Additionally the positioning of the feet on different areas of the soles

of the feet activates different organs and areas in your body. So already the first exercise on the Universal Reformer was created to activate, correct, connect, and heal.

Wouldn't it be great if a country could rely on its healthy citizens, because these are sound in body, mind and spirit?

If the state's health system furthers intelligent movement systems like pilates generously.

If it costs less to prehab people than rehab them?

If J.H. Pilates' vision becomes true and people trained in his system become peaceful, healthy individuals who spread the system's reputation and advantages?

If pilates teachers were accepted as important stepping stones for a person's own path to a healthy lifestyle?

If pilates was promoted starting in kindergarten, going on into schools, and later in old peoples' homes?

If this system created by a health advocate gets its merits then in the medical, political and social realms?

Andrea: Your last paragraph is written as questions so I added question marks, but I think it would be more powerful if it was written more as - this is what we can gain as a society if everyone in that society did Pilates.

I would write it as:

If the state's health system supported and financed intelligent movement systems like pilates generously, it could:

- rely on healthy citizens who are sound in body, mind and spirit
- save on health care costs as it costs less to prehab people than rehab them
- Save on mental health care cost as people trained in this system become peaceful, healthy individuals who spread the system's reputation and advantages

Pilates teachers should be accepted as important stepping stones for a person's own path to a healthy lifestyle. Pilates has the potential for a lifetime of practice, starting in kindergarten, going on into schools, and continuing right into senior's homes.

Pilates, created by a health advocate, deserves merit in the medical, political and social realms.