



January 20, 2008

Waccamaw Pilates

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Pilates: a Method for Living

“The acquirement and enjoyment of physical well-being, mental calm and spiritual peace are priceless to their possessors if there be any such so fortunate living among us today. However, it is the ideal to strive for, and in our opinion, it is only through Contrology that this unique trinity of a balanced body, mind and spirit can ever be attained” (Joseph Pilates, Return to Life through Contrology; 1945).

Joseph Pilates Method for balanced mind, body and spirit was originally released in print in 1945. This Method, named Contrology, is comprised of his experience and study in the martial arts, self-defense, yoga, acrobatics, boxing, and an impressive knowledge of anatomy and physiology. Contrology developed into a program of repetitious exercises that provide a combination of *stretch and strength*. With commitment to the Method, Pilates’ contends; *“In 10 sessions, you’ll feel the difference. In 20 sessions, you’ll see the difference. In 30 sessions, you’ll have a different body.”*

As Pilates’ teacher apprentices went out on their own, they used his name to identify their training programs. In recent years, with no family to carry on the Joseph and Clara Pilates name, a US Federal Court ruled that “Pilates” is a generic term and free from unrestricted use. The result, that there are different Pilates programs from which to choose. Some programs have stayed true to the “pure” or “classical” system of Pilates, while others have drawn from the classical, and added their own personal flair to the exercise program. What they should all have in common is the development of a strong body core, or “power-house”. Focused exercises from the inside-out, not only working the body’s strength, stability, stamina and stretch, but connecting these elements with the mind and spirit. Pilates should feel good and you should feel you have had a full body workout. If you are having pain during or after Pilates, then you are doing the exercises incorrectly, and they should be modified to meet your needs.

Joseph, and his wife Clara, also developed the apparatus training system, taking the Mat exercises, and making them more challenging with spring resistance. Pilates’ designed and built the Reformer, Cadillac, Wunda chair, High chair, and several different types of Barrels. Apparatus training increases the intensity of the exercise, and with consistency, can give you quicker results.

Pilates is the complete strength and stretch work out. Find a program that most closely follows Joseph Pilates original Method: Why reinvent the wheel? Ask your instructors about their training/certification programs. Be sure to tell your instructor if you have any preexisting injuries, or difficulty with movement, so they can modify to give you system that best suits your needs. Joseph Pilates dream was to have a studio of his Method on every corner in New York City (there is a Pilates studio on just about every corner in New York City). He wanted his program to be available to everyone, at any age, or stage in their life. Give Pilates a try, and see how it can improve you strength, stability, stretch, and stamina!

*Sandy Goodin is the owner/instructor of Waccamaw Pilates in Pawleys Island. Sandy's Mat and System certification is from **Power Pilates**, a classically focused program. She is a member of the Pilates Method Alliance, and an Registered Nurse.*