

Pilates Body Conditioning Secrets

True health and fitness is about more than having a strong body. Reaching your full wellness potential means realizing emotional and spiritual health as well. The ideal fitness regime would offer a complete physical and mental workout. The Pilates Method is one such program that can bring this level of complete well-being.

Joseph H. Pilates, the legendary physical trainer and founder of the Pilates Studio, developed the Pilates method of body conditioning in the 1920s. Nearly one hundred years since its inception, the Pilates Method is still considered to be an important exercise system that benefits the entire body; improving strength and flexibility without building bulk. The resulting strong yet sleek physique made the Pilates Method the perfect choice of dancers including Martha Graham, George Balanchine and other legendary performers.

While Pilates body conditioning provides wonderful physical benefits, it's not just about exercise. The Pilates Method actually incorporates a series of controlled movements that engage your mind as well as your body. These controlled movements are typically performed on specially designed exercise apparatus, with careful supervision by highly trained and experienced Pilates instructors.

The Benefits

Pilates body conditioning promotes physical harmony and provides overall balance. This is why it's such a great fitness choice for people of all ages. The Pilates Method provides a refreshing and energizing workout while it promotes physical condition.

The body conditioning sessions of Pilates may be performed one-on-one with a certified Pilates teacher or in small, closely supervised groups. This personal attention allows the instructor to tailor each session to meet the specific needs of every customer. Regardless of your current level of fitness, the Pilates Method can be used for both body conditioning, and injury prevention.

Many physical therapists have adapted Pilates body conditioning into their rehabilitative exercise programs. The Pilates method has proven to be useful in speeding the recovery of soft tissue injuries. Many orthopedists and chiropractors have also realized the benefits that Pilates body conditioning can offer for their patients.

Under proper supervision, expectant mothers can also enjoy the many benefits of Pilates body conditioning. In addition to increased physical strength, Pilates programs help to enhance proper breathing techniques and body alignment. It can also help in recovering body tone and shape postpartum.

The Differences

What sets Pilates body conditioning apart from the other fitness trends is that Joseph Pilates initially developed more than 500 specific exercises, performed on five major pieces of unique apparatus. Rather than performing a number of repetitions for every exercise, Joseph Pilates preferred fewer, more precise movements. Performing these precise movements involved proper form and control. This enhanced form and control requires the ability to allow your mind to engage with your body. For this reason, it is very possible that you will experience a greater awareness of muscle control and function # a factor that is not often experienced by those taking part in other fitness programs.

Another main difference is that Pilates body conditioning focuses on supporting and strengthening the body's "powerhouse" of lower back, abdomen and buttocks. It is believed that when the powerhouse is made the focal point of support and strength, the rest of the body will be allowed to move freely.

In many ways, Pilates body conditioning is different from other fitness and exercise programs. While strengthening the body, it provides equal conditioning to the mind and spirit. Try Pilates, and decide if it is the right whole-body regime for you.