

Personalities

A Pilates Prescription For Good Health

Master Pilates teacher Julian Littleford is 45, handsome and English. His body posture, muscular tone and fitness reflect the success of an exercise method developed in the 1930s by Joseph Pilates. As a 17 year-old studying dance in London, Littleford turned to the Pilates method to improve and awaken his mind/body connections. Realizing the wisdom of the process, Littleford studied with Alan Herdman to become one of the original trainers in the Pilates method at his London studio during the late 70s. He has worked with a variety of artists, including Rudolf Nuryeyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov. When Littleford moved to New York for eight years to take the position of principal dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company, he also took with him his Pilates knowledge and training, continuing to integrate it into his daily exercise regime.

Littleford points out that clients show-up at his Del Mar Pilates studio for a variety of reasons, including a desire to improve their core strength, flexibility, and tone, reshape their body, or diminish injury pain. "Awareness is the first key to change," he explains. "I learned that my body was an instrument for moving through life with health and ease." Besides, he adds, "Pilates method works because it is intentional movement that brings awareness to the interconnectedness of one's own internal and external structure. It is a kind of East meets West philosophy, where the teacher supports the client to look and listen to his/her damaging habitual body patterning through concentrated breathing and movement. Awareness with correction by a trained teacher can lead to making concrete changes in as little as thirty days, which is profoundly liberating." Littleford knows from experience that the Pilates method allows one to work on correct form and range of motion, while breaking through inner barriers. "With practice," he concludes, "this leads to the healthy reshaping and remapping of both mind and body."

Master teacher Littleford is a founding member of the Physical Mind Institute and opened his own studio in San Diego in 1990. He visits Rancho La Puerta as a master teacher and is the director of Pilates training at Pilates de Mexico in Mexico City. He was the athletic trainer for Cirque du Soleil's Drallion touring show in Southern California and is currently the Pilates program director for the San Diego Padres. — Ingrid Hoffmeister

