

Welcome to the Pilates Progressions home study. The purpose of this home study is to help instructors bridge the gap between the Traditional Pilates Method that they've been taught, and the reality of teaching an open mat class to students who may or may not know the "rules" of Pilates, and who also come in late and leave early. Distractions that come along with teaching in a club setting is also discussed. "Pilates Progressions" is intended for instructors with previous Pilates experience.

Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to develop and teach safe and effective Pilates exercises in an open mat class appropriate to multiple levels of students.
2. Students will be empowered to think critically, able to utilize formula to create Pilates progressions and modifications while staying true to the principles of the Pilates Method.
3. Students will confidently bridge the gap between common exercise classes and the mind/body methods, providing a successful class experience for all participants.

Assumptions

1. Students in "Pilates Progressions" have a good foundation and knowledge of Pilates.
2. Class Participants in Open Mat classes are apparently healthy adults – we will not be focusing on Special Populations.

Your Pilates Experience

Here is an opportunity for you to explore your own Pilates experience and/or history. There are multiple styles of Pilates exercises, which often means that as students, we are learning from a variety of sources that may or may not support the same philosophy of teaching. Being aware of this as instructors may help us connect with individuals who may have learned the discipline in a very differently way than we have. Becoming aware of our own experience in learning helps us connect with others who are just beginning that journey or have learned a different style than ours.

1. How long have you been practicing Pilates Exercise? _____.

2. How long have you been teaching Pilates Exercise? _____.

3. How did you learn Pilates?

- Video
- Class Setting
- Book
- Private Training
- Professional Training
- Other _____

4. Has your method or approach changed since you first learned? How?

5. What are some challenges you've faced as a Pilates instructor?

Traditional Pilates vs. Open Mat class

Characteristics	Traditional Pilates Class	Open Mat Pilates Class
Purpose	Traditional classes are established to allow students to learn Pilates principles and exercises in a systematic way. Students sign up for a 6 or 8 week session. It may be offered once or twice per week. Each class builds on the last by first affirming what was learned in the last class and adding onto that knowledge or experience with the principles or exercises. Students approach the class with a high level of commitment to attend and learn. Perhaps because they have paid extra to take the class.	Open mat classes are typically offered for no additional fee on a regular class schedule at a full service gym or club. The people that attend these classes may or may not have experience with Pilates.
Attendance	Attendance may wane as the session progresses. Students find scheduling conflicts but some students may realize it is not the exercise format they thought it was and it may not be for them. These students will most likely only attend an open mat class in the future if it works with their schedule.	Attendance may vary greatly from week to week. Some students will find they really enjoy the exercise format and may cross over and pay for a traditional mat class so they can enrich their experience. Other students will attend semi-regularly because they do find some benefit, or the timeslot fits in their schedule or they may try it out if their regular class was cancelled. (for example they normally take a cycle class at that time but it was cancelled)
Student Experience	Students progress as a group and are exposed to the same lessons, encouragement, and feedback. The group moves forward together.	Some students may be very experienced and advanced. Some students may have little or no experience. Some students learned a completely different set of principles and alternate takes on particular exercises.
Student Attitude	Students arrive on time or even a little early to begin the process of practicing principles, connecting their mind and body, or to just settle down from a busy day.	Students arrive right on time or a little late. The challenge with late arrivers is that they may be new and not have any idea what the class is about. They often miss very important concepts the instructor has opened the class with.

Characteristics	Traditional Pilates Class	Open Mat Pilates Class
Music	No music and quiet, so that the students are not distracted as they focus on improving the mind body connection. The focus is on learning the principles and exercises.	Background music often played to create more of a relaxed atmosphere. The focus is on enjoying the experience.
Distractions	Often the studio is created and placed in a quiet part of the building where students are distracted as little as possible.	Studios used for open mat classes are usually the same ones used for general group exercise classes and there are numerous distractions including music from the class next door, announcements, people talking loudly within earshot, or weights clanging.
Lighting	<p>Prefer the room dimly light, similar to yoga classes.</p> <p>Dedicated studios will offer pleasant lighting options like dimmer switches, rope lights, up lights, etc.</p>	<p>Prefer the room dimly light, similar to yoga classes.</p> <p>Many multi-use studios do not have a lot of options for lighting. Instructors may turn half the lights off, turn all the lights off and keep a corner light on or the door open to shed some light in. They may have to just teach class with all the lights on because there aren't any options.</p>
Class Attitude	There is a definite right and wrong way to do the exercises. Much time is spent on exact form and movement. Typically a set plan of what to cover in a class and how it will be covered has already been established. The instructor focuses greatly on feedback and form correction.	A greater latitude for altering exercises based on student need offers likelihood of success and student satisfaction. Instructors focus on WHY an exercise is important and HOW they can teach it to their students. They may not have a plan for class decided beforehand. The class make-up often determines what the intention or focus the class will have that day based on student observation and need analysis.