

## **What is Pilates?**

**Most people are aware of the importance of regular physical activity to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Why do many of us drop out of exercise regimes?**

**Is it boredom, inability to switch off from the problems of the day, lack of time, fear of aggravating physical problems, or perhaps, in spite of all our efforts, we fail to achieve the results we hoped for and may even experience more aches and pains and a lower self esteem?**

**If we can find a routine that the body will want to follow and exercise every muscle in a careful, controlled way without the need for equipment, hours at the gym or a fitness video, then it is possible to achieve the strength, flexibility and well being we are seeking**

**For 100 years the unique Pilates method of strengthening the muscles at the centre of the body supporting the spine and internal organs whilst improving flexibility and joint mobility, has provided a relaxed, pain free system of exercising restoring balance to the body and capturing and maintaining the interest of the mind. Almost anyone can use this system on its own or - as in the case of athletes, dancers gymnasts etc. - as part of or recovery from the rigors of intensive training.**

**Born in 1880, Joseph Pilates suffered from asthma, rickets and rheumatic fever as a child and his exercise method grew from his determination to strengthen his frail body. He became proficient at diving, skiing and gymnastics and dedicated his life to the improvement of physical fitness.**

**Pilates called his system “contrology”, using the body and mind to develop smooth, unhurried controlled movements with correct breathing. The body becomes stronger and sleeker increasing physical and mental strength and endurance, important in the prevention of injury performing daily tasks or assisting in the recovery from an injury. Many types of back pain can be relieved and the ability to exercise without discomfort restores and improves self-confidence.**

**Pilates encourages correct movements every time an exercise is performed, without wasted effort and heavy weights, with the individual completing a sequence of exercises flowing from one to another. A whole body workout is achieved engaging mind and body.**

**Once the philosophy of Pilates is understood, each movement can be developed and integrated into other types of exercise and sport and into the better performance of everyday tasks. Pilates needs careful teaching in small groups where correct supervision is always available.**

**Pilates will reward your effort and exercise will no longer be a chore becoming a welcome addition to your life**

**Anne Ackerley Pilates Instructor**



