

# Bender Ball Pilates

With Leslee Bender

[www.bendertraining.com](http://www.bendertraining.com)

# Leslee Bender



- Leslee Bender is the founder and creator of the Bender Method™ of Training
- With over 25 years of international fitness experience, Leslee has presented throughout the world, providing unique and progressive methods in all forms of fitness training

# What makes this course different!

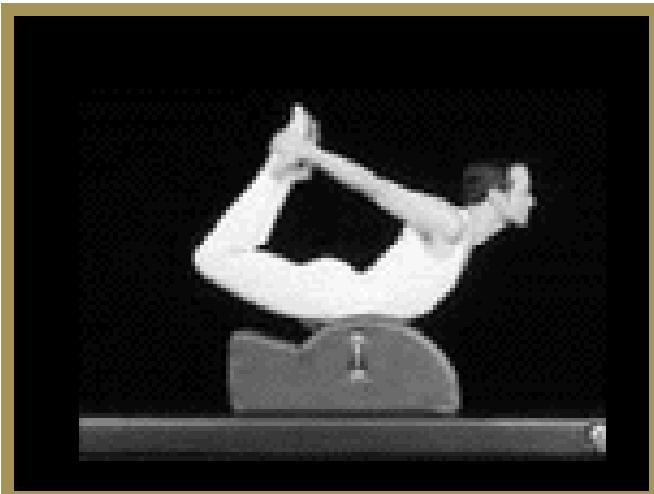
- Traditional exercises were designed for dancers By utilizing a small ball you will be able to do certain exercises bio-mechanically safer and more efficiently
- The method of utilizing a small ball has been documented by The Journal of Applied Research Vol. 7 No. 3
- All exercises have been analyzed for today's society
- Not all traditional exercises are safe AND ARE CONTRAINDICATED for the general population
- The clients of Pilates were elite athletes with acute body awareness.

# Unsafe or safe method



# Joseph Pilates Client

- Lives in extension
- Athlete
- Flexible
- What % of today..
- Can move like this???



# Bender Method Principles

- Focus on what you are trying to achieve, the mind moves the body
- Your center is where all movement stems from
- Your breath is what helps to create a movement
- Each movement has a purpose
- Ask why and what you are doing

# Safety comes first....

- Can you stabilize the spine?
- Can you move 100% pain free?
- What are you trying to accomplish?
- Do not perform 'teach'
- Watch each and every student
- Limit class size
- What do your clients need?
- Curing is crucial
- Avoid excessive spinal and hip flexion
- Neutral is crucial

# Creating a class that works for our changing world

- Limit class size
- Learning about postural problems
- Learning to not over train the stronger muscle groups such as the RA and Psosas
- Become a thinking instructor and really notice when students are moving incorrectly and how to fix it
- Cueing involves tactile, verbal least important.

# Begin with standing neutral

- There should be a plum line from your ear, shoulder, hip, knee and heel
- There should be a natural alignment of the spine.
- Draw the navel to the spine to create a corset which is known as the “powerhouse”
- A body that thinks for itself is a body with great posture!!!!

# Our society



# Where we live.....



We would experience less pain  
if we sat in neutral



# Why Neutral?

- Imprinting creates low back pressure up to 2000neutons of pressure when the psosas is engaged due to a weak Transverse
- Most students do not have the intra-abdominal pressure to actually stabilize their spine and will ultimately press the low back into the mat creating low back pain.
- Pilates worked with an imprinted spine due to the population he worked with was predominately dancers.
- In the world of Physical therapy and post re-hab neutral is crucial for low back health and maintenance.
- It is not functional to spend a great amount of time in a supine position on a mat due to that is not where we live!
- Any supine and or standing exercise should be initiated in neutral to activate core muscles before starting any movement.
- Once a student can actually sub-consciously support their spine movements become safer and more effective!

# Standing neutral 'plumb line' what you should look for..



# How to find neutral both in standing and supine

- Postural observation standing
- Kyphosis, lordosis, sway, flat, scoliosis
- Finding neutral standing
- Finding neutral supine with hand under the spine partner
- Place hand under the spine and feel whether they are imprinting and tightening the muscles of the spine
- Toe taps, knees at a table top

# Standing neutral



# Supine neutral



# Breath is crucial in Pilates training



# How to breath and what to feel

- There are many schools of thought regarding the breath. We suggest you inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth
- Cue, inhale as though you were smelling a rose and exhale with a soft jaw and fog up a mirror
- Cue, as you inhale expand your ribs slightly laterally and as you exhale draw the navel to the spine.
- Mistakes are made when the student inhales and fills the belly and not the lungs and has a difficult time activating the abdominal wall.

# Muscles of your ‘powerhouse’

- The core is crucial to know and feel
- Transverse abdominus
- Internal external obliques
- Rectus abdominus
- Erector spinea
- Multifidus
- Gluteaus maximus, medius minimus
- Hamstrings

# Pre-Pilates

- Necessary for breathing and body awareness
- Must be performed before any mat program to prevent injury
- The ball provides protection of the lumbar spine and must be used for all flexion exercises
- Opportunity for student to discover what they should and should not feel

# Pre-Pilates exercises

- Standing neutral with breath
- Standing balance with hip flexion or abduction
- Arm extension
- Side bend
- Rotation
- Standing spinal flexion
- Kneeling side bends
- Supine neutral
- Toe taps
- Leg slide
- Knee sway
- 100 prep
- Cat cow
- Prone neutral
- bridge

# The exercises

- seated spine curl with variations
- Seated spine cure with oblique twist
- Supine toe taps with ball under the spine with criss cross
- Side lift
- Prone scapula stabilization
- Side lying abduction
- Front kick
- Knee twist 'tailwag'
- Frogs
- Articulating bridge
- Single leg bridge pelvic stabilization
- Corkscrew helicopter
- Rolling like a ball
- Mermaid
- Saw

# resources

- Core muscle activity during exercise on a mini stability ball compared with abdominal crunches on the floor and on a Swiss ball  
Journal of Applied research Vol 7 No 3  
2007
- Low Back Disorders second edition Stuart McGill 2006
- [www.thepilatescoach.com](http://www.thepilatescoach.com)